

2dartist

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108

Issue 108 | December 2014

Create the
cover!
Step-by-step
tutorial inside!

Design and draw fantasy creatures

Learn to create convincing
fantasy creatures from your
imagination

Craft concept car designs

Markus Lovadina shares pro tips
to get you started with your own
vehicle designs

Create atmospheric interior scenes

Jonathan Guzi reveals his
workflow and techniques for
crafting a cool aircraft interior

+plus

- 10 of the best digital images
- **Speed paint underwater scenes**
- Become a concept artist
- and much more!

SKETCHING CHARACTERS IN PHOTOSHOP

Amanda Kihlström shares her
fantasy characters and
tattooed ladies

Master the art of painting pin-ups

Cris Delara guides you through a step-by-step
tutorial to paint a racing driver pin-up



Editor's Letter



JESS SERJENT-TIPPING
Deputy Editor

Welcome to 2dartist issue 108!

From speed painting techniques to photo textures and a whole host of sketchy goodness in between, as always there's something to get everyone inspired to get creative! Create the cover with a master class from top pin-up artist, Cris Delara, and improve your vehicle painting skills with a step-by-step tutorial from Markus Lovadina.

Fantasy illustration guru, Justin Gerard guides us through the process of sketching fantasy creatures, while Amanda Kihlström gives us a sneak peek at the pages of her sketchbook, filled with cool tattooed ladies. With a gallery bursting with stunning images, stacks of top tutorials and digital painting resources, there's plenty to keep you going until next year. Enjoy!

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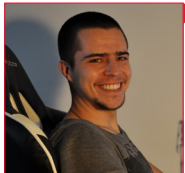
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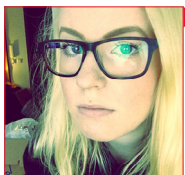
ALEX NEGREA

Alex Negrea is a freelance concept artist and illustrator working mainly in the gaming industry. He lives in Romania, near Dracula's Castle. Alex likes learning a lot, it doesn't matter what it's about.



MARKUS LOVADINA

Markus Lovadina, aka malo, is currently working as a senior concept artist, as well as a freelance concept artist/illustrator for the games and movie industry. He has also worked on movie projects and book covers.



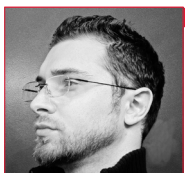
AMANDA KIHLSSTRÖM

Amanda worked on various freelance projects until she got her first job in the industry as a graphic artist in 2011. Now she works as a lead artist and assistant art director at AEGIK.



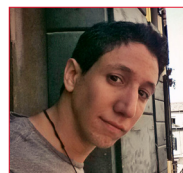
DENIS LOEBNER

Denis Loebner is a concept artist from Berlin, Germany. He currently works as a concept artist at Innogames GmbH in Hamburg. He gives an insight to his speed painting process.



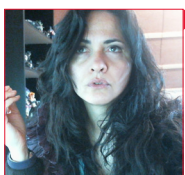
JUSTIN GERARD

From the moment that Justin Gerard first learned that crayons were meant for coloring and not eating, he has been drawing. He derives inspiration from nature and human history, though his favorite source is story.



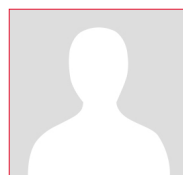
JONATHAN GUZI

Jonathan Guzi is a concept artist currently living in San Francisco, CA. He freelances for the film and games industry, and is currently working on an upcoming project for No Look Productions.



CRIS DELARA

In 2008 Cris moved from Brazil to Canada to work as an art teacher at Niagara College and open her own illustration studio. In 2006 she decided to branch out and specialize in her true area of passion, pin-ups!



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We are always looking for tutorial artists, gallery submissions, potential interviewees, writers and more. For more information, please send a link to your work to: jess@3dtotal.com.

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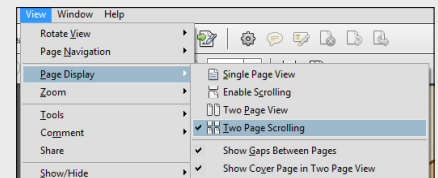
If you're having problems viewing the double-page spreads that we feature within this magazine, then follow this handy little guide on how to set up your PDF reader!

Top tips for viewing

For optimum viewing of the magazine, it is recommended that you have the latest version of Adobe Acrobat Reader installed. You can download it for free here: [DOWNLOAD](#)

To view the many double-page spreads featured in 2dartist magazine, you can set the reader to display "two-up", which will show double-page spreads as one large landscape image:

1. Open the magazine in Reader;
2. Go to the **View** menu, then **Page Display**;
3. Select **Two Page Scrolling**, making sure that **Show Cover Page in Two Page View** is also selected.



Jump to articles

In the Contents pages, we have direct links to all articles within the magazine. If a certain article catches your eye, simply click (or tap on handheld devices) on the page number within the Contents, and you will be taken straight to that article.

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Whenever you see this symbol, be sure to click it to download free resources to accompany that article!



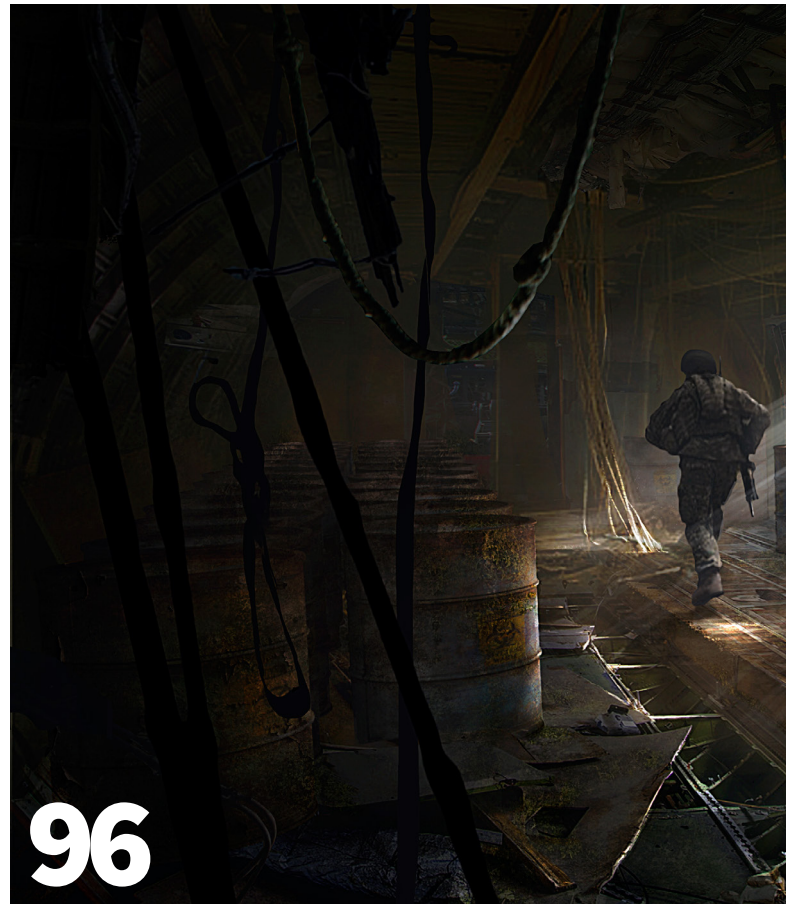
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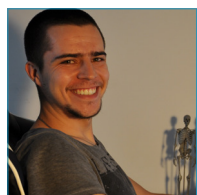


Become a concept artist

Freelance artist concept artist and illustrator, Alex Negrea talks about his career, as well as sharing his work and best-practice advice with us. ▶



The Artist



Alex Negrea

alexnegrea.blogspot.com

Interviewed by:
Jess Serjent-Tipping

Alex Negrea is a freelance concept artist and illustrator working mainly in the gaming industry. He lives in Romania, near Dracula's Castle. Alex likes learning a lot, it doesn't matter what it's about.

Alex Negrea is a professional illustrator and concept artist from Romania. Alex changed the course of his studies to focus on concept art and digital illustration and was soon able to boast clients such Volta Canada, Crytek, Applibot Inc. and Gameloft Romania. Alex tells us about his journey as an artist, how he progressed, and what keeps him inspired.

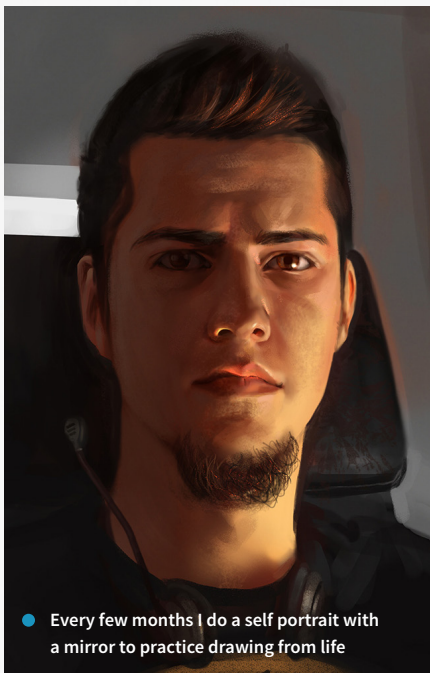
2dartist: Hi Alex, thanks for chatting with 2dartist today! First, could you tell our readers a little bit about yourself and your background in digital art? Where did it all begin?

Alex Negrea: Hi! Thanks for having me. My whole career started out of desperation I think. I was studying at a Computer Science College and I was really bad at it. After one year I was pretty sure that I had no future in this field, so I started looking for other options. That option was art.

I went to a design college hoping that I could study there and fortunately the admission was done without a test or portfolio. And that was really my first step into this. Since it was the second college I was attending, I promised myself that I'd have to do this super hardcore, no matter what!

2da: What was it about the digital tools that made you want to pursue a career in the industry?

AN: I was actually thinking about this recently. If it wasn't for digital tools I probably wouldn't draw; or at least not on a professional level. The main reason I like digital is that it is a forgiving medium. It's easy to change or undo in an easy way. And the second thing that makes it more appealing is that it's way cheaper than the traditional medium.



● Every few months I do a self portrait with a mirror to practice drawing from life

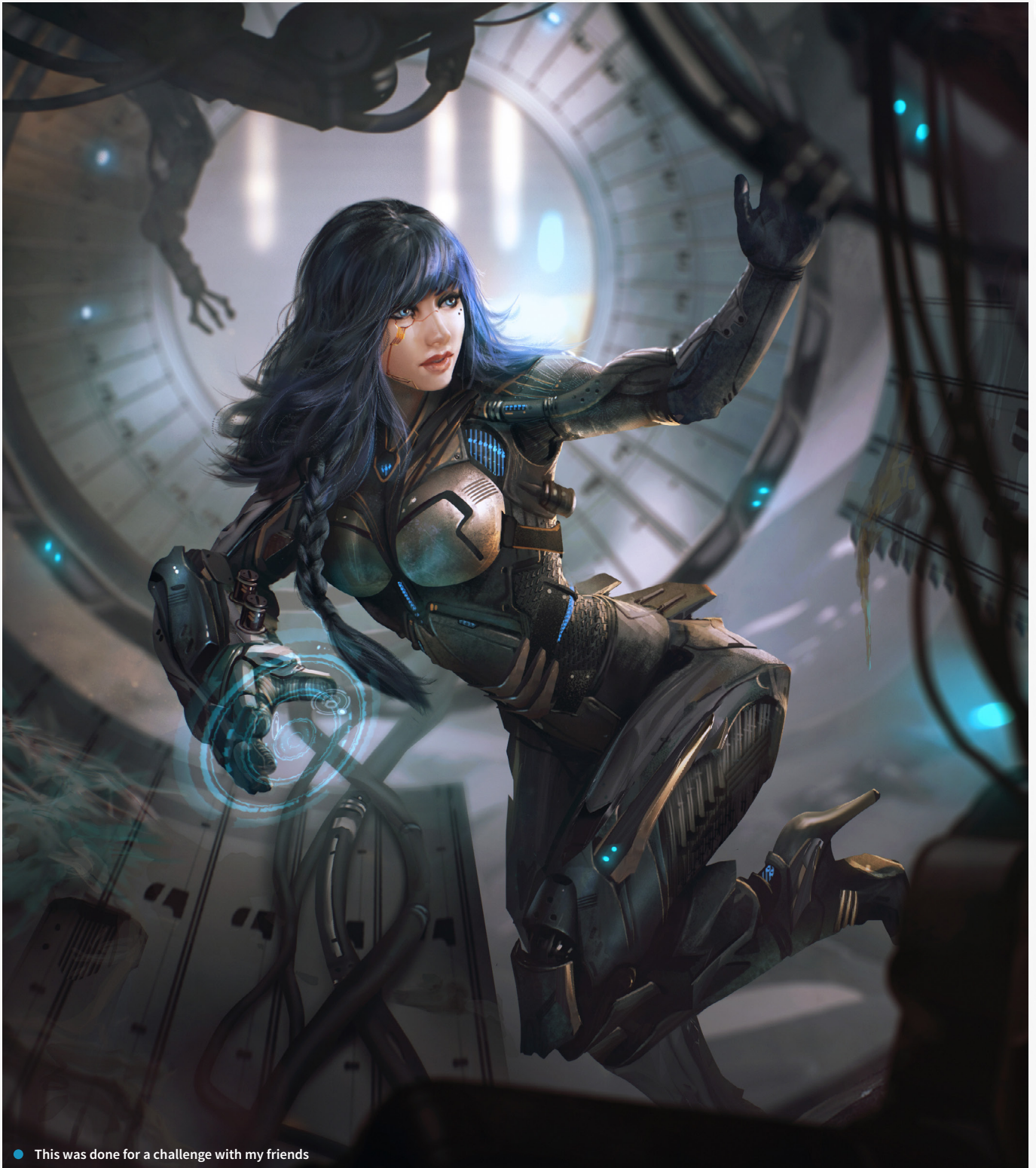
● Recently, some friends and I have been doing challenges between us with a picked topic. This was my entry and it's supposed to be a zombie hunter



But when I started I was approaching the digital medium from a wrong angle. I was a super fan of Andrew Jones and seeing his creations made me think that it was the software that created them, or at least a huge part of it is due to the software. When I tried it myself I realized that I'd still have to know

the basics of art, so that's why I started studying the fundamentals really hard.

2da: Where do you draw your inspiration from? What influences your work and motivates you? ►



● This was done for a challenge with my friends

🕒 Artist Timeline Alex's career so far...

2005: Architecture degree

2009: Started drawing after I was doing badly at Computer Science College

2009: Signed up for a Design College even without a portfolio

2010: Started practicing really hard with studies

2011: Successful job interview with Gameloft

2011: Started freelancing with various clients

2012: Quit fulltime job to pursue freelance full time

2013: Started teaching at workshops and doing University talks

AN: I get motivated by everything. If it's a success story I want to hear it! One of the first success stories was Algenpfleger's. He was my main motivation for a long time. The way that he was breaking up the learning process and the intensity that he was doing it at was super inspiring for a beginner artist like me.

But I absorb motivation from every field. I like to listen to TED Talks, watch documentaries, and listen to celebrity biographies, sports and so on. I don't really need inspiration if I have motivation. I realized I can draw whatever I set my mind to if I put the effort into learning the "why" or the "how" of the subject.

2da: Could you choose one of your favorite past images (that you've created) and explain a little about its creation, and why it's your favorite?

AN: I don't have a favorite image from my gallery. It's because I get tired of them before they are even finished. I like to compare it with the desktop background changing routine. You can see an image and really like it for just a couple of days. After that the magic goes away and you have to change it for a new one.

But process-wise almost all my images follow these steps:

1. Lineart sketch – finding out the composition and solving the design of the image

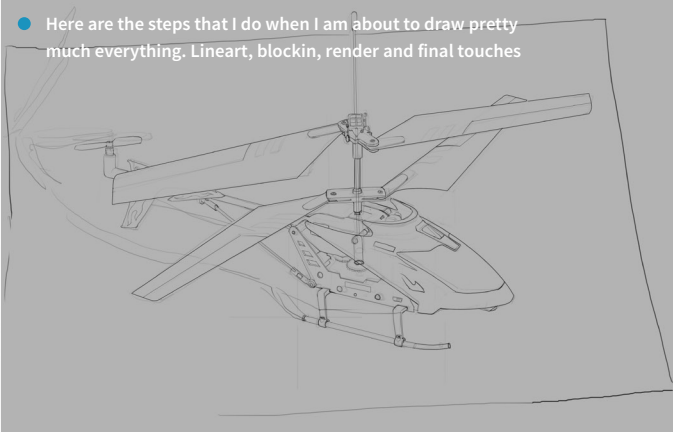
- I do a lot of studies of armor and anatomy, and this is the way I combine everything into original designs. I try to do them daily



2. Research – once I figure out at step 1 what I need to study I start doing studies and research about the subject
3. Apply all the knowledge from step 2 into the image

The way I see every artwork is as a collection of small problems. If you solve them all you might get a good image. ▶

- Here are the steps that I do when I am about to draw pretty much everything. Lineart, blockin, render and final touches





● Another image done for a challenge among friends

- This image was done for a friend's Kickstarter campaign. I did the rendering for it

⚡ PRO TIPS

Repetition is the key

Every time you do something more than a couple of times it will open up to you and reveal some new insights about it. For example: doing gestures can help you to better understand the movement of the body and that's the initial read that everyone is getting. But if you spend some more time on the same pose you start to notice secondary details such as hairstyle, eye color, and clothing patterns and so on.

Surroundings make your subject what it actually is

When you are painting something pay attention to the surroundings too. It can alter the way you are seeing the main subject. Colors especially tend to be affected by this. A color can be judged correctly only when you put it next to another color.

Write about and document your studies

When I am writing about the subject that I am studying it helps me better understand and remember what I am doing. My brain switches into analytical mode and it pays more attention than usual. Also when I look over my studies later it's easier to remember what I learned.







● This image was the first successful image I ever did. It was like this because I have spent a lot of time researching how to render everything you see in it



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2da: Do you have any favorite software, techniques or processes that you apply to your artwork, that you would consider your signature style?

AN: I like to use Photoshop. It's efficient resource-wise, it doesn't crash that often, and it's an industry standard. But from time to time I jump around and play with other software such as ZBrush, SketchUp, 3ds Max or CLIP STUDIO PAINT.

My goal for next year is to implement 3D into my 2D workflow so I can cut some corners when it comes to client work. For personal work I really like to stick to 2D only, all drawn/painted by hand. It feels like I've achieved something when I can do it all from my head.

2da: When you aren't creating digital art, how do you spend your free time away from the demands and deadlines of the creative industry?

AN: Before drawing I was playing the guitar as a hobby. These days I have picked it up again and I was surprised how many principles of drawing I can actually use when making music. Composition, contrast, patterns, rhythm and so on are all present in music too.

It's the same art, but with sounds this time. In the beginning drawing was a hobby, but these days it

feels more like a job and sometimes I really need to stay away from it. Too much of something is not too good for me.

2da: What would be your perfect project to work on?

AN: If I could be paid just to improve my art skills that would be my dream job. Since I started I've wanted to become a top artist. My only goal was and still is improvement. If I don't learn something new for a long period of time I tend to lose motivation. Project-wise I don't have any games or movies that I would love to work on at the moment. Everything can be fun or not.

2da: What has been your favorite project to work on/ greatest artistic achievement?

AN: My greatest achievement I think is starting to teach at workshops. I really like to connect to real-life people and to share my current knowledge with them. Being a freelance artist is super lonely sometimes and just talking on the internet just doesn't do it anymore. Also at these kind of workshops you get to meet all kinds of people from beginner's to top professional artists, or people that help organizing these workshops to hotel receptionists. They all have a story to share that will inspire you somehow. Living life is an art form itself.

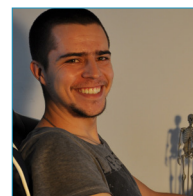
2da: If you could give future digital artists one piece of advice on working in the industry, what would it be?

AN: For me working harder than I was expected to work did the trick. So I would gladly recommend this. Be open and help everyone that asks for your help. This industry will evolve only if you are open to sharing everything that you know. Doing this will create tougher and harder competition, and that will make you a better artist. We need people to push the limits forward and to inspire the future generations to do the same!

2da: Finally, what can we expect to see from you in the future?

AN: Honestly, I don't know. I like to shake things up once they become routine. But to answer the question, I would probably learn some more ZBrush. It's super fun and intuitive and since I have a decent foundation of drawing it feels super easy to wrap my head around sculpting digitally. ●

The Artist



Alex Negrea

alexnegrea.blogspot.com

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Legend of the Cryptids –
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THE DIGITAL PAINTING RESOURCE

LayerPaint allows you to browse the gallery, interviews, news, tutorials and products all dedicated to 2D digital art. On top of that, we have included a free custom brushes library that is available to everyone.

We wish LayerPaint to be a definitive resource for digital painting, creating a friendly and educational environment that not only helps budding and experienced CG artists alike, but also showcases some of the best computer generated artwork in the world.

AMANDA KIHLSSTRÖM

Sketchbook

Amanda Kihlström is a lead artist with a passion for sketching pin-up girls and anything fantasy. Here she gives us a sneak-peek at her Photoshop sketches, inspirations and techniques.

The Artist



Amanda Kihlström

amanda-kihlstrom.
deviantart.com

Amanda worked on various freelance projects until she got her first job in the industry as a graphic artist in 2011. Now she works as a lead artist and assistant art director at AEGIK.

Discover Amanda Kihlström's sketchbook of cool female characters and pin-ups...

My sketchbook primarily consists of fantasy themed images and pin-up girls. I sketch to clear my mind and to relax without having the pressure of feeling that I need to complete it, so most of my personal sketches tend to be things within my comfort zone.

When I'm at work I can really be creative and sketch things I usually wouldn't, and work on my versatility. I get to try different styles and themes – which is important in order to stay creative, at least for me. Going somewhere new with your art can end up being surprisingly invigorating.

Besides painting and sketching, I like to play videogames. As a result I really enjoy drawing characters that I think would fit into a game, or a character that I would want to play as. My respect for sketching comes from all the times I've seen how a few well-placed lines can make a drawing pop, this is for me a constant source of inspiration. The freedom in sketching is very liberating. I think messing up a drawing should be viewed as a step to becoming better. When I look at my sketches from several years ago, they still function as a reminder about what I've learned through struggling with anatomy and perspective.

A good sketch to me is like catching a glimpse of the artist's creative process; showing flaws and imperfections in all their glory. It's not perfect, it doesn't need to be, it might become the skeleton for a complex painting, it might not; the focus for me while sketching is upon the creative surge of the moment.

01 Experimenting with different poses

02 More experimentation with poses



Inspiration and ideas

I get most of my inspiration from music; if I hear a song I really like I instantly get super inspired and start sketching whatever comes to mind. Games often give me huge amounts of inspiration as well, because they often contain impressive scenery, creatures and amazing character designs. And of course, very talented artists I find on the internet inspire me as well.

Materials

I use my Wacom Intuos Pro and Adobe Photoshop, and when I want to sketch traditionally, I use whatever pen and paper is available in the time and place.

Sketching techniques

I start by doing really basic shapes and messy lines. Then, I put that layer on a lower opacity and make a new layer over it and start doing more defined lines and details. It depends on what kind of sketch I want to do; sometimes I think the really messy sketch looks good and sometimes I want it to have a more finished look, and at those times I might do a third layer to add even more defined lines and details. For other environmental sketches, I work more with values and shapes, usually with a big round brush. ●



02



03 Fantasy characters I did in my spare time

04 Mage character I did in my spare time

05 Character design for an original character I am developing

⚡ PRO TIP

Character designs

Tell a story with the designs. Where do the characters live and what would they wear? Do they need weapons or not? Ripped and torn clothing and scratched metal are a really good way to tell the viewer that something has happened to this character before, that he or she has been through some stuff. That makes the character more believable.





05



“Going somewhere new with
your art can end up being
surprisingly invigorating”



06 Practicing composition

07 A pinup girl I did for fun



08



09

08 A sketch heavily focused on the face

09 A quick sketch before bed



10 Example of how a sketch can look in a very early stage

11 Work in progress of a personal painting



2dartist

Would you like to see your sketches featured in 2dartist magazine?

We're always on the lookout for talented artists
and their artwork to adorn the pages of our
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We look forward to hearing from you!

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Art Gallery

Each issue the 2dartist team selects 10 of the best digital images from around the world. Enjoy!



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J. R. Coffron

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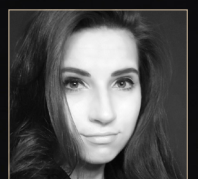
Michal Lisowski

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Das Maedchen mit der Habe

Eve Ventrue

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The Crag

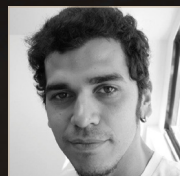
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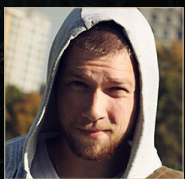
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Factory

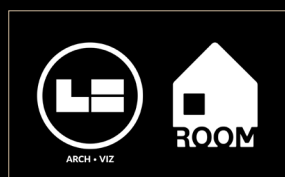
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Casa da Música

Leandro Silva & Pedro Silva

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Software used: Photoshop

Web: leandrosilva.pt/ls_room







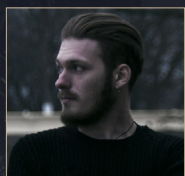
Tomcat series

Piotr Jablonski / Nicponim

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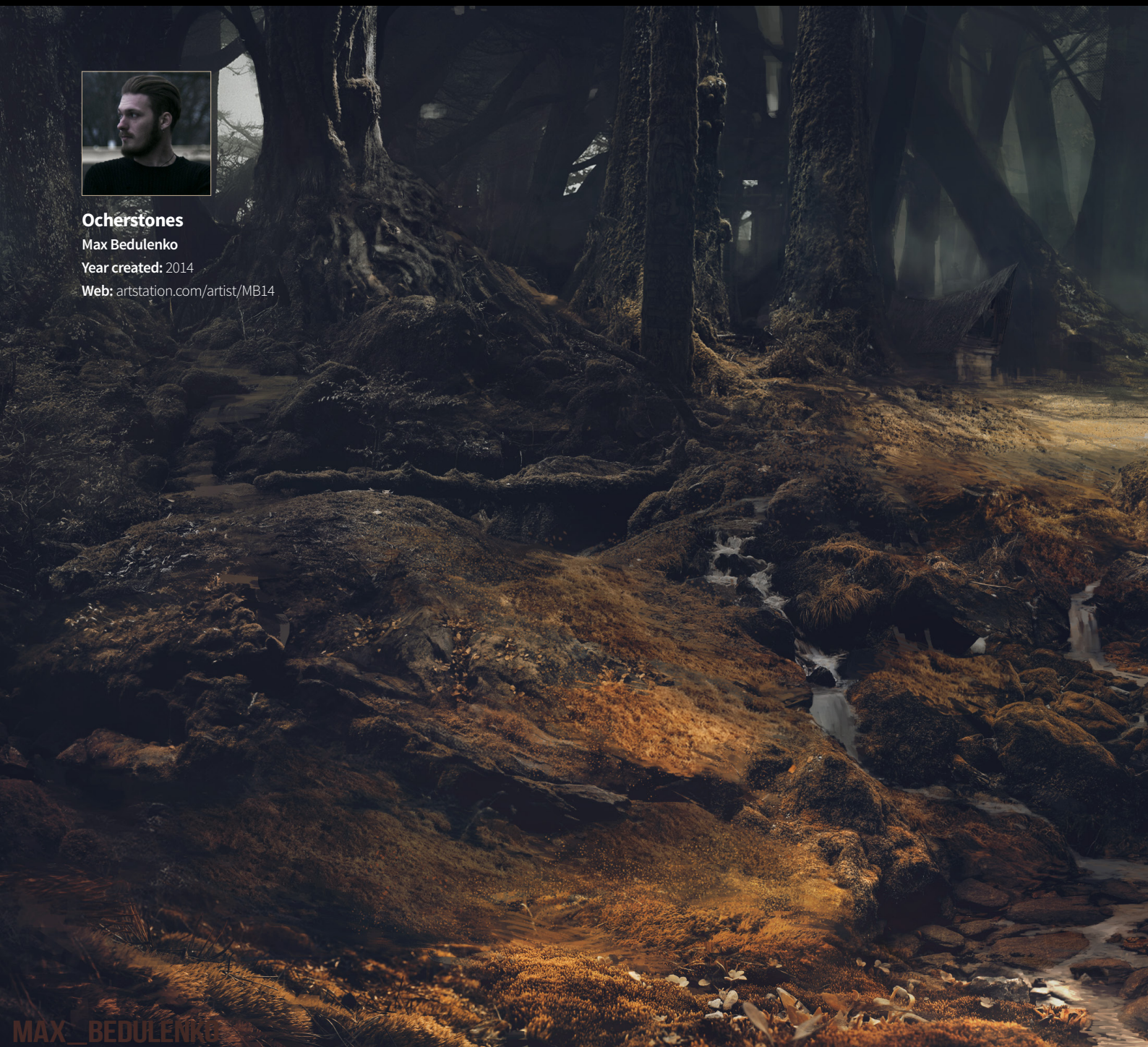


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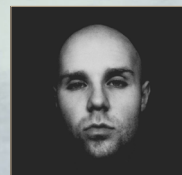


MAX_BEDULENKO





**TOMCAT
BROTHERS**

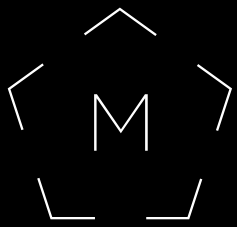


Tomcat series

Piotr Jablonski / Nicponim

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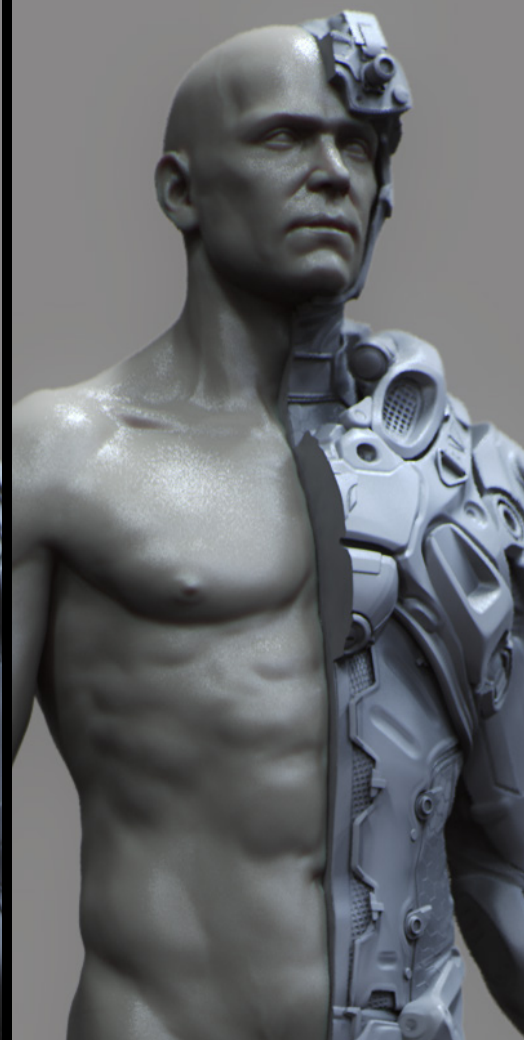
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FEMALE PLANAR

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The Artist



Justin Gerard
gallerygerard.com

Materials Used:
Traditional tools

From the moment that Justin Gerard first learned that the crayons were meant for coloring and not for eating, he has been drawing. While Justin has always derived a great deal of inspiration from nature and human history, his favorite source of inspiration is story. The works of J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis have remained constant sources of inspiration for him throughout his career.



Design and draw fantasy creatures

Justin Gerard guides you through his process of designing and sketching believable fantasy creatures, sharing top tips and advice to improve your sketching techniques 

Learn how to create convincing and cool fantasy creatures from your imagination...

"For the artist, there can be no greater teacher than nature itself."

Drawing fantasy creatures from your imagination is often very fun, but left to imagination alone, they can often feel too abstract and like they don't belong in the real world. The best way to make your creatures feel like they are a part of our world is to study real creatures.

When I began to study animals in nature, I came to realize that there are already some pretty fantastic creatures loping around out there in the world.

Using real world creatures as a basis, we have an amazing range of possibilities for imaginative and fantastic creatures that still feel like they belong here.

This workshop will emphasize the usage of reference from nature for. But before we begin with all the real-world science, let's start by using just our imaginations.

Tools

Drawing paper, tracing paper (for this tutorial I used Strathmore 300 series Tracing paper). 2H, HB, 2B pencils (for this tutorial I used General's Kimberly pencils), kneaded eraser.

01 **Creature Ideas:** To begin, I draw my ideas in shapes that feel right for my scene. I have two separate types of creatures I need designs for:

1. The ambushing frog tribesman
2. The cart-horse

As I am designing these creatures I need to consider where they came from and where they live. Are they heavily furry creatures adapted to a colder climate? Are they multi-limbed marsupials dwelling in a very arid climate? Do they live under damp rocks? Use your imagination and get to know your creatures before you ever begin to put your pencil down on paper.

The carthorse

My scene takes place in a jungle and I believe I would like a jungle-appropriate animal as my carthorse; perhaps a boar, a tapir, or an elephant? Choices, choices!



01a



01b

First I scribble down the general look and feel that I want my creatures to have. I draw these very small, just a few inches in size, and never spend more than a few minutes on each little drawing.

The ambush

Since this is a jungle scene I will go with tree frogs as the basis for my ambushing tribesmen. I don't ►

PRO TIP

Detail later

Don't worry about trying to draw all the details at this stage. That will come later. Right now focus on the shape and design of your creature.

know what they look like yet, so I do some rough exploration. As with the carthorse, I draw quick, small thumbnails on cheap paper stock.

Do my tribesmen have head-dresses of leaves? Or maybe they wear eagle skulls with feathers? Are they using sticks and spears or obsidian daggers? As I draw my roughs I am thinking about these ideas and trying to get to know my little antagonists better.

02 Draw a group! My frog ambushers are gathered in a small group. Drawing groups of animals can be daunting at first, so it is important to simplify things a little to keep the mob under control.

To draw large groups of figures I begin with very rough scribbles, just enough to get the shapes right and placed properly in relation to one another. Again, we are not worried about fine details at this stage, just the rough shapes.

03 Massing: When I draw these, I place the major joints first, (shoulders, elbows, hands and so on) and then scribble in circles in an effort to really understand where the muscles form around the joints. This 'massing' up of shapes will help you capture your figures in 3D.

Once I have a nice set of scribbles, I place a sheet of tracing paper over this and redraw it, this time with more precise lines. My scribbles can now be cleaned up and turned into nice solid forms. As you can see I have left all of their adornments off for the moment. I really want to understand their shapes first, and then we can add all the fun weapons and gear onto them later.

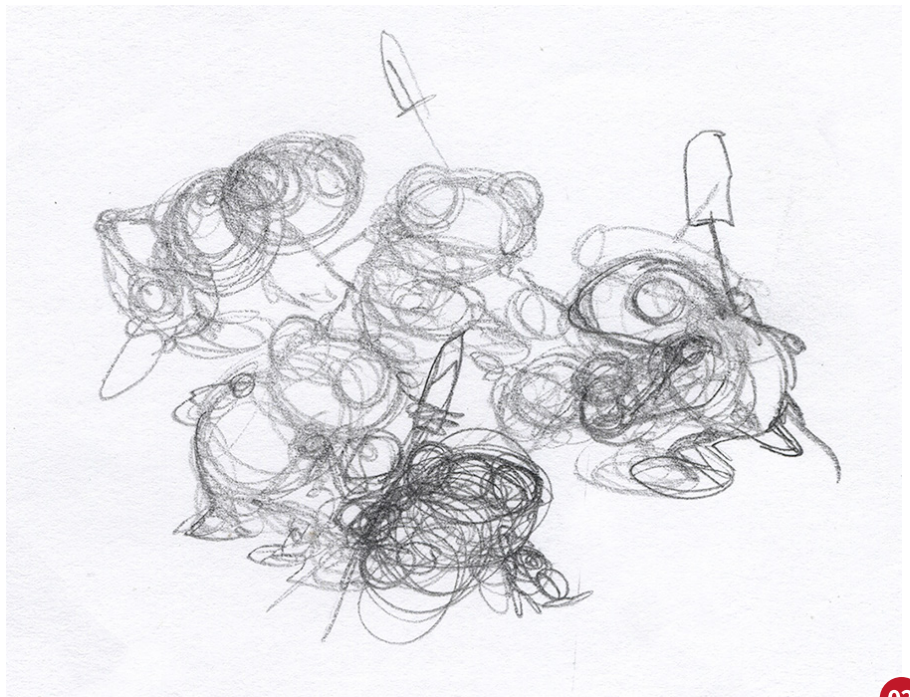
04 Collect your reference: Now for the science part! Now that we have our ideas locked down from our imagination, let's go reference hunting!

For my tribal frogs, I found many pictures online of South American tree frogs. I also supplemented these with pictures of local tree frogs that I had taken myself.

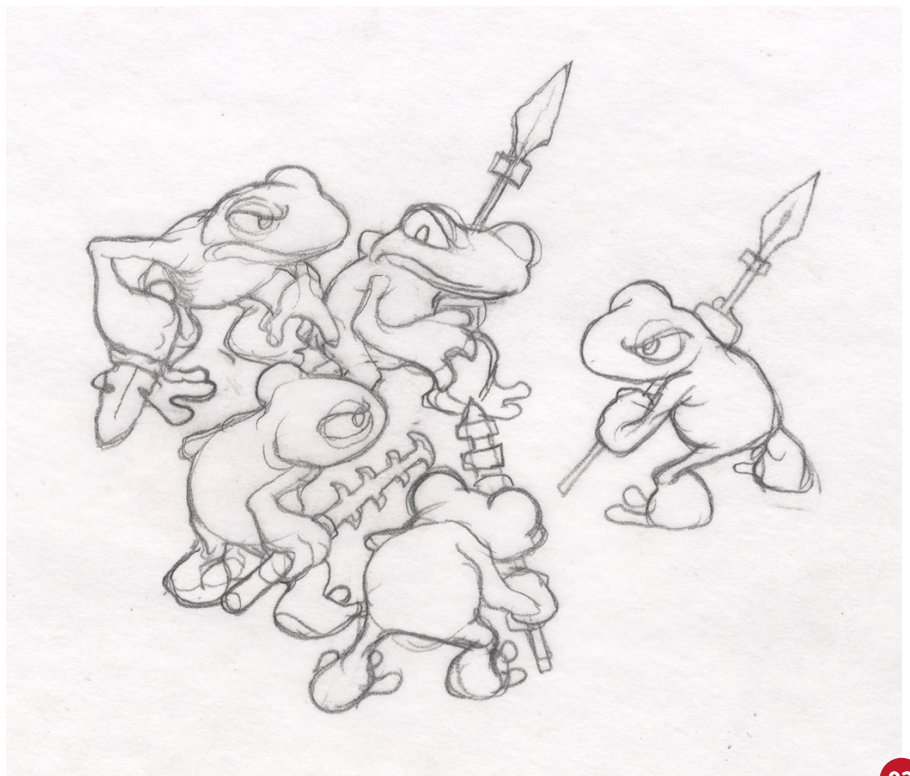
For my carthorse/tapir/elephant, I utilized a book on mammals of South America that had been collecting dust on my bookshelf.

Since I am still undecided as to whether it will be a tapir, an elephant, or a giant boar creature, I gather reference on all of those animals and head back to my drawing desk.

05 Draw exactly what you see! Now that I have my reference I am going to



02



03

⚡ PRO TIP

Why not use reference at this stage?

It is important to get your own ideas down first, straight from your imagination, before you gather too much reference! You can always change your ideas later to fit your reference, but it can often be hard to change your reference to fit your ideas. If you dwell too much on references at the beginning, or even worse, copy straight from photos, you may lose some of the special individuality of your idea that makes it uniquely yours. In short: ideas first, then reference.



04a



04b

⚡ PRO TIP

Working rough

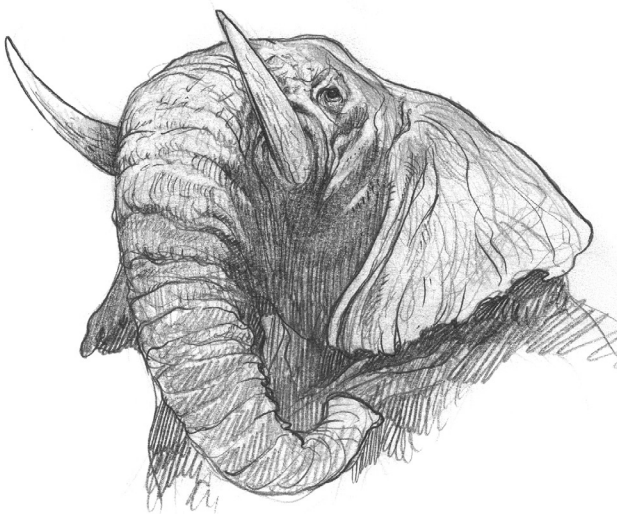
When doing studies from life, you don't have to be perfect. The intention of these drawings is not that they will be finished, framed pieces of art – they are just for you, so that the creatures in your painting will look more real and authentic to nature. So don't spend too long here. Just draw quickly and as faithfully to the image as you can!



04c

do representational drawings of the creatures. By drawing from reference photos (or better still, from life), you are committing the details and forms of these creatures to memory and building a visual library in your brain for future use. Now when you draw from your imagination in the future your brain will be supplying more information to your imagination about how animals look and function.

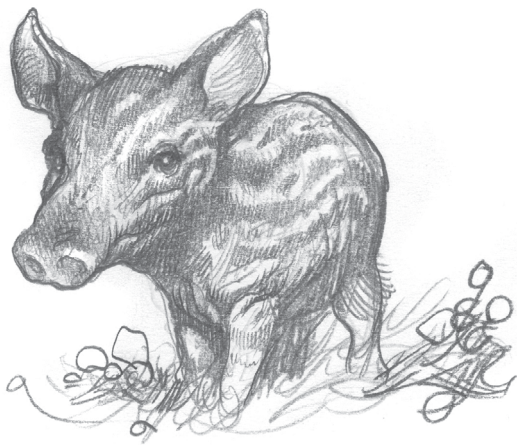
Study the details, the shapes and the overall structures. Memorize the parts and try to pay attention to how each part relates to the others. How far is the eye from the ear? How far from the nose? Where does the jaw line end? As you draw you will be subconsciously dedicating these details to your library for use later on. ►



05a



05b



05c

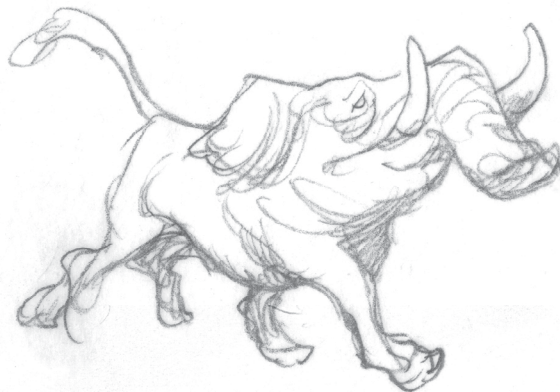


05d

Now that we have drawn images from our reference, let's put it away and prepare to really craft our creatures.

06 Refining our creatures – a new drawing: Using what you have learned about the creatures you just drew from your reference; redraw your original creature from your thumbnail on a new sheet of drawing paper. This time I will work larger, and will explore more details in my drawing. As I draw these I am pushing and pulling the shapes, sometimes erasing and redrawing in order to really get the character right.

Now that I have studied elephants and tapirs more closely I am realizing which parts I want to take from each creature to make my carthorse for this scene. I do several looser drawings until I hit the one that seems to capture the look I am after. I am taking a nose from this, tusks from that, and the body from something else entirely. It is all my idea, but now it has been corrected and is better adapted to live in our world.



05e



06a



07 **Cleaning up:** Now I pull out my tracing paper and place a few sheets over my loose drawing. I place just enough sheets of the tracing paper over the drawing so that I can still just barely see the drawing underneath. I like to see my new lines on the top sheet very clearly. ►

⚡ PRO TIP

Careful!

Be very careful when using lighter tracing paper. It is prone to buckling and tearing if you rub or erase too hard. I use a 2H pencil to establish my lines, and then a HB pencil to reinforce and shade my drawing.

⚡ PRO TIP

A little personality

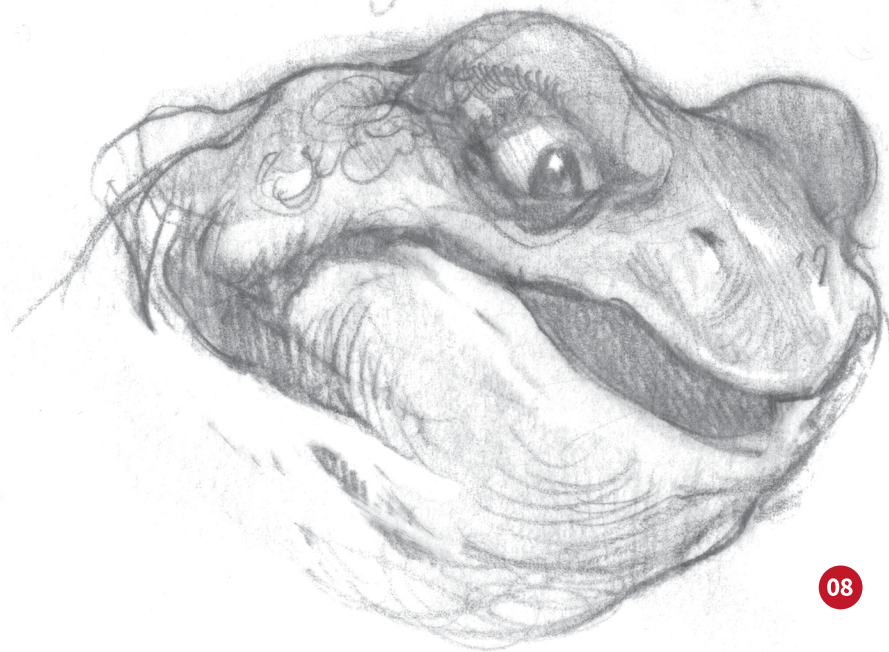
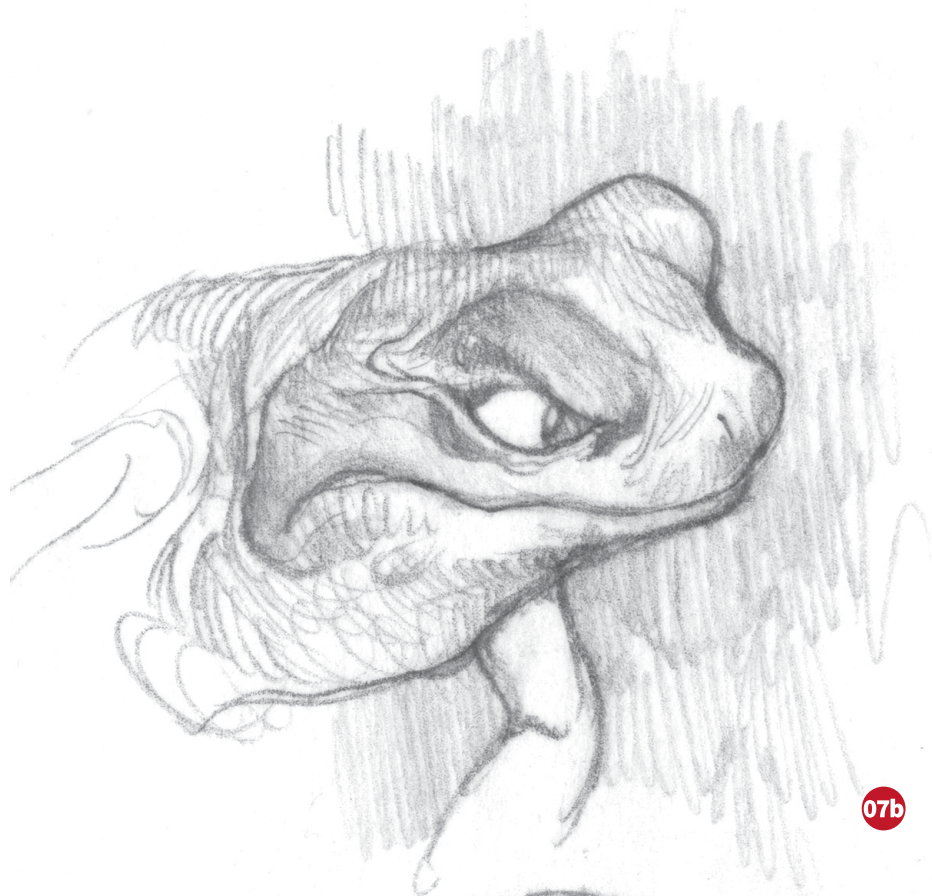
For creatures that have human-like expressions it can be helpful to have some reference beyond what we collected earlier. For this I sometimes use a mirror (or the camera on my phone) and will make some faces at myself until I find the expression that fits.

Now I will repeat these steps for the frogs! Once again, I am drawing a rough version of each of my frogs on my drawing paper, and then I am placing tracing paper over that in order to trace and refine my final version of each frog.

08 Mirroring: After I have traced my basic drawing over to my tracing paper, I take my original drawing out from under it. At this point I can flip my tracing paper drawing over to see what it looks like in reverse. This trick can be very helpful in showing you where your character proportions are wrong. Now when you flip your drawing back over you will know how to center it better and correct any errors.

If your scene is highly complex, and the creatures are near human, you might even consider posing some of your family or friends so you can get the forms right.

09 Final frog drawings: Now I am ready to do my final drawings for my frog tribesmen. As with my carthorse I place a few sheets of tracing paper over my rough drawings of my characters, and trace their shapes lightly with a 2H pencil. After this I use a darker HB pencil to refine the drawing and add shadows and shapes. ●





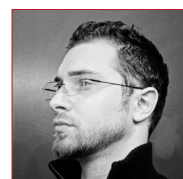
09b

⚡ PRO TIP

Shading

The best shading for you to use is whatever gets the job done for you. For my work here I have used a combination of hatching and 'edging', where I use the side of the pencil (instead of the tip) to draw.

The Artist



Justin Gerard
gallerygerard.com

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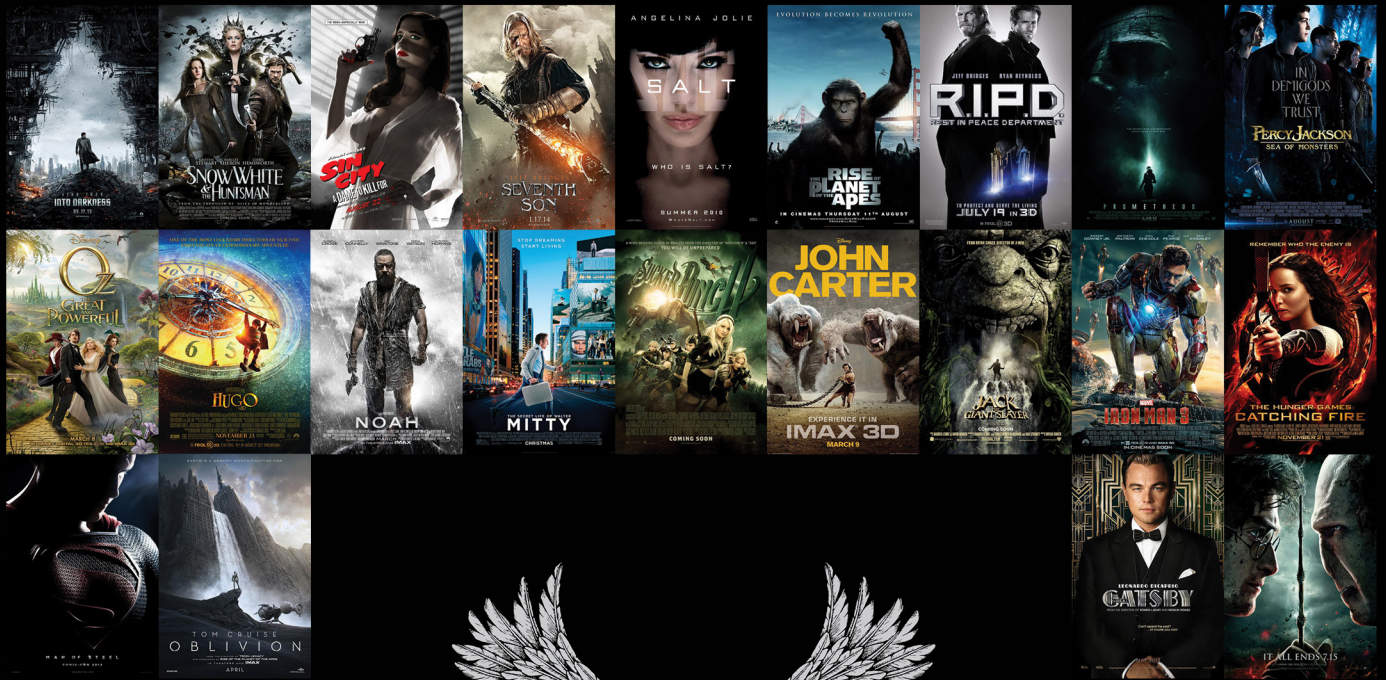
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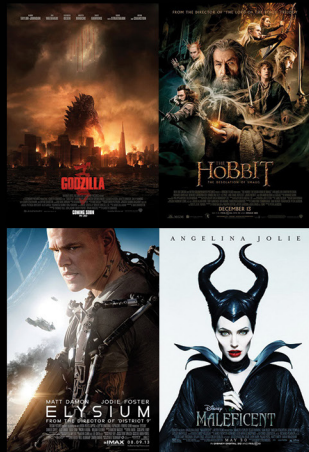


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The Artist



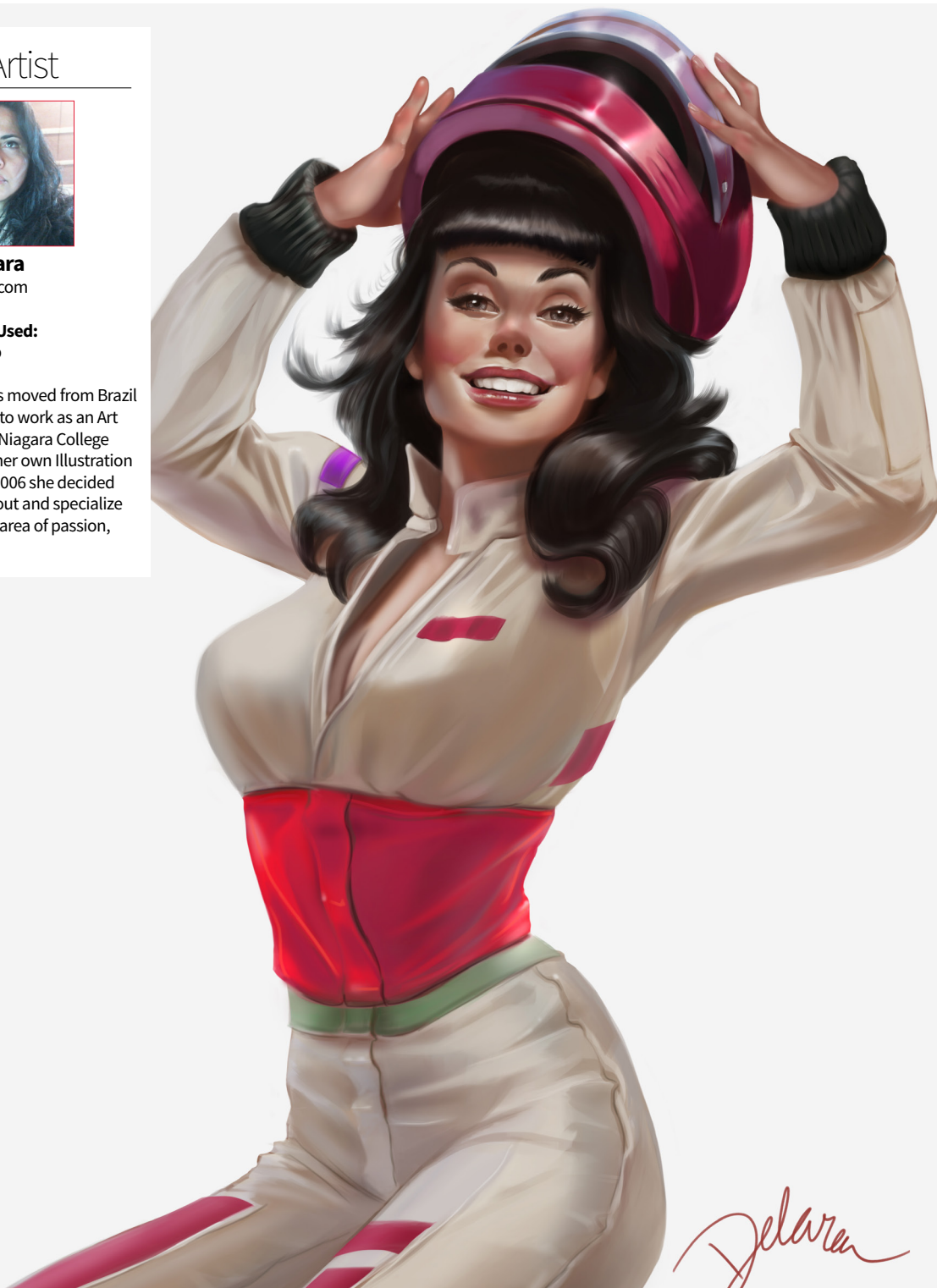
Cris Delara

crisdelara.com

Software Used:

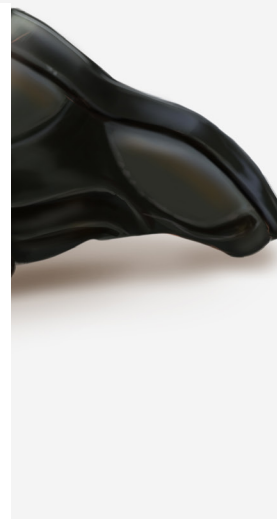
Photoshop

In 2008 Cris moved from Brazil to Canada to work as an Art teacher at Niagara College and open her own Illustration studio. In 2006 she decided to branch out and specialize in her true area of passion, Pin-ups!



Master the art of painting pin-ups

Hone your pin-up painting skills as Cris Delara guides you through her process of designing and painting a racing driver pin-up. From conceptualizing the outfit and deciding on the pose, to choosing a color palette and most importantly getting the expression right! ▶



Discover top tips and techniques for painting the perfect pin-up...

A pin-up itself is, by assumption of most people, a common, and sometimes vulgar, sexually evocative image of a girl. However, a good pin-up design is much more than sex appeal; actually it is one of the bestselling resource used in any advertising and marketing campaign strategy.

We find a huge variety of pin-up styles related to any subject, and for the purpose of this tutorial I will show you the conception, design and painting of a race car driver pin-up girl; combining a classic vintage and contemporary realistic style.

My chosen concept is inspired by the vintage images of Elvgren and Rockwell, although with no nudity, but with a provocative cleavage and curves. This means I want to present a well known classic pin-up pose with an expressive and appealing body language, a friendly and charming smile. I'd say she is an ordinary girl with a vivid attitude.

I sketch out some sweet but intense poses as well as facial expressions, searching for contemporary references of racing car outfits, shoes, helmets, and so on. All these features

will support me with a better color pallet, and a better lighting scheme to match the mood and feelings from a racing car environment for my pin-up.

The feelings of the intense speed, the precision of movement, the pursue for the best lap, the pleasure of victory, the glamour of fame, and so on, are essential features that I want to put across in my pin-up. I hope that the readers can relate to the image and, at the end of the day, turn an ordinary girl into a pretty and desirable racing car driver.

01 Gesture: Gestures are important because they represent a sense of overall form. Not only must they show what the subject looks like but also what it is doing.

I do the initial gesture sketches loose, and I am not worried about small details because I want to capture the energy of the movement, its rhythm and balance. So, I do some quick and deliberate marks – using the line and coil techniques – such as the form of an object in space where your eyes can follow its shape.

02 Body language: The body language establishes a visual communication that should be clear and easy to read and understand by the audience.

In the case of a vintage pin-up, I need to add glamour, elegance and beauty through her body position, movement, facial expression and eye movement. This will make an interpretation of feelings easier, and also create a strong and sensual appeal without a vulgar approach.

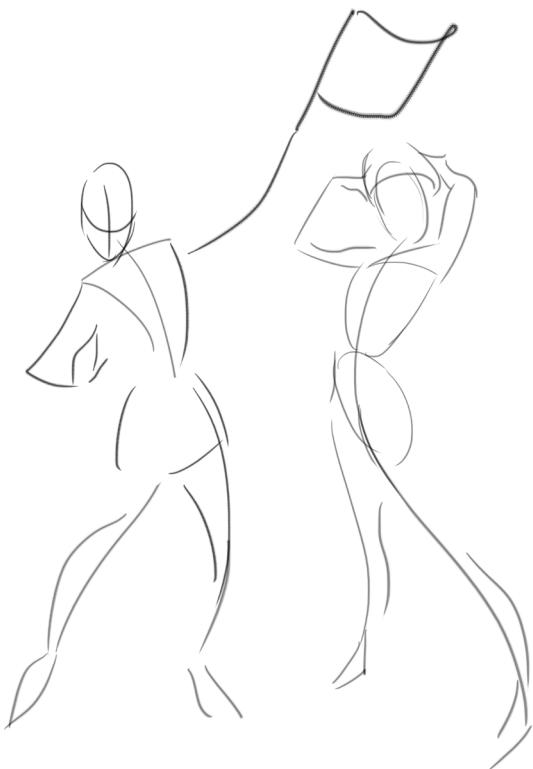
A pin-up's body language is often related with one of the standard poses: standing up, sitting down or lying down. Therefore, the main requirements for any pin-up pose are straight and curve which means the posture is held as upright (straight) as possible, always improving her curves. Here are some tips:

- If she is standing up, draw her at an angle; the line of action should always be curved
- If she is sitting down, draw her elegant and sensual (never in a relaxed posture)
- If she is lying down, draw her arched; you can improve her body curves by avoiding the flat butt effect

03 Deciding on the pose: For this tutorial I decide to go with a sitting down pose. But if you are working for a client, for instance, ►

01 Laying down some quick flowing lines

02 Make the posture poised and curvy



01



02

and it's them (not you) who decide what pose is the final one, try to follow these tips to make consistent sketches:

First, remember the pin-up's main element is straight and curved in any of the three standard poses. Second, when sketching pin-up poses, start with a warm-up exercise, 5 or 10 minutes maximum, whether standing up, sitting down or lying down poses, make them as free and organic as possible.

Finally, make light, soft and loose sketches using the free line technique for a flat sketch, or the coil technique for a more dimensional one; but keep in mind that elegance, freshness and movement are important to contribute to the message; after all, just a beautiful face does not make a good pin-up.

04 Outfit: After searching the web for racing car driver's outfits, I duplicate my chosen sketch to experiment with some outfit choices. As I want to draw a vintage style mixed with a contemporary style pin-up, I need to adjust the traditional, comfortable and tailored men's overalls to a slimmer, tighter version to fit and highlight the curvy model.

Out of the different overall versions, including some with short legs and some with short sleeves, I choose the full body overalls. Not only does this have a modern approach but leaves room for marketing, logos, sponsorship, and so on.

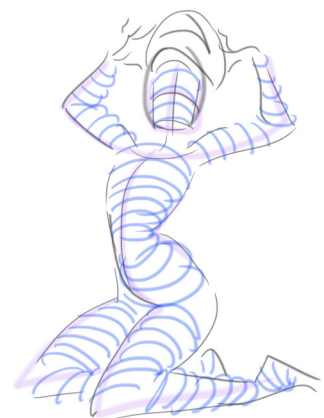


As I am mixing the styles I can play with a colorful palette, instead of painting the stereotype of female fatale sexy black leather overalls.

Of course, I draw some quick sketches, to feel if my intuition is going in the right direction, because if any changes are necessary, now is the time to do it, in the drawing phase, before it is too late.

05 Expressions: Expressions are a very interesting subject that interacts with the feeling, the mood and the way the message is transmitted to the audience.

Areas to consider for a clear expression are eyes, eyebrows, forehead wrinkles, mouth, cheek and chin muscles. You have to practice and draw a lot of these facial elements to be able to draw a convincing expression.



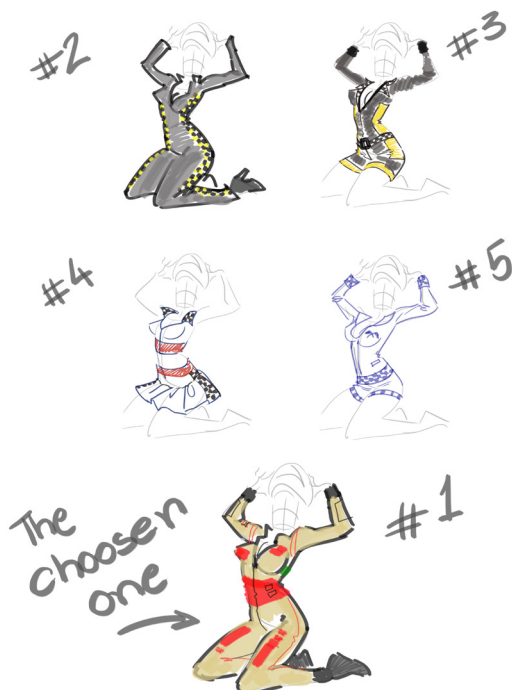
03

It must be clear that the expression matches the gesture and body language used. I mean, for instance, it does not match the image of an athletic girl wearing a fitness outfit in an action position, ready to perform a back flip with a sleepy expression.

For this tutorial, I want my pin-up to have a cute and charming smile. I want to convey a clear and joyful expression of pleasure and energy, which is showed through the balanced facial anatomy and right interaction with the body language.

06 Digital lineart: Since the beginning of this concept art I have been drawing all my sketches and lineart in Photoshop, because it is faster and easier for me to make changes and undo areas.

I open a 11 x 17 inches blank canvas in 300



04a



04b

dpi, and with a regular Hard Round brush with Opacity set to 100% and a black color selected, I do all the sketches I need. When I need to highlight something in my sketches, I just change the brush color (as you can see in the steps for body language and pose for instance).

If you prefer, you can do all your sketches in the traditional way with pencil and paper. After that, scan the sketches at 300 dpi, open them in regular layers and make any changes, highlights or notes, which support you in the next painting step.

When I do my pin-up paintings I always save my sketches in a separate file. I only move the final and approved sketch to a new file, where I start my painting process.



#1



#2



#3



#4



The Chosen one
Expression → #5



03 Deciding the pose using line and coil techniques

04a Experimenting with different outfit choices

04b The chosen outfit

05 Choosing the right expression

06 Preparing my final lineart

05



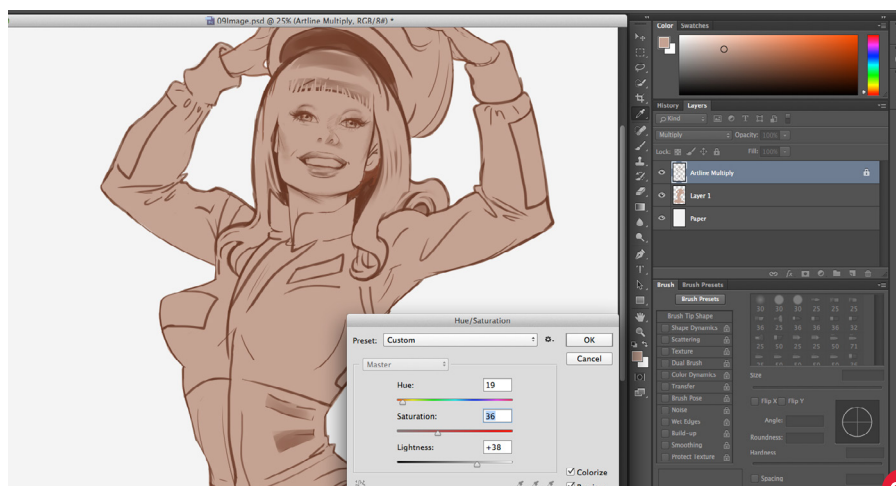
06

07 Preparing for painting: Now it is time to start painting. I open my final approved sketch (which was saved in the same size and resolution) in a new 11 x 17 inches, 300 dpi, blank canvas and I start cleaning it up.

I clean it using the Eraser tool and a Round Hard brush with the Opacity set to 100%; I erase not only the imperfections on the lineart, but also the areas within it (where I will be adding color).

I then convert the sketch layer to Multiply mode, change the lineart color from black to brown using the Hue/Saturation tool (this ensures the lineart will blend better with the future color) and finally lock it with the Lock Tool in the layer palette to avoid any accidental painting in it.

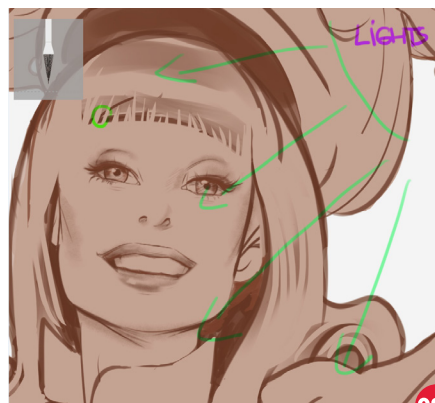
This allows me to see my future painting layers under the sketch layer. I choose my base skin color tone and I lay it all over the image using a Hard Round brush with the Opacity set to 100%.



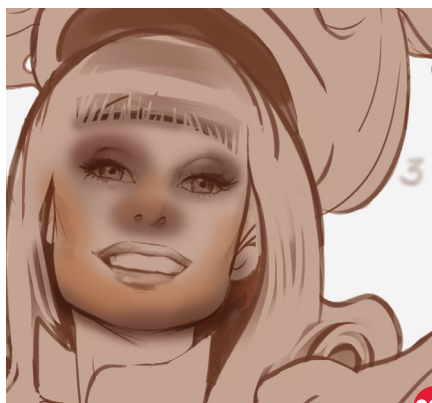
Note: Remember that the layer which receives the painting is under the locked Multiply sketch layer. And the choice for the skin color tone is up to you; if you would prefer a brunette or caucasian or tanned girl, the skin color/tone will of course be different. I erase the painting, which

exceeds the boundaries of my lineart by using the Eraser tool again.

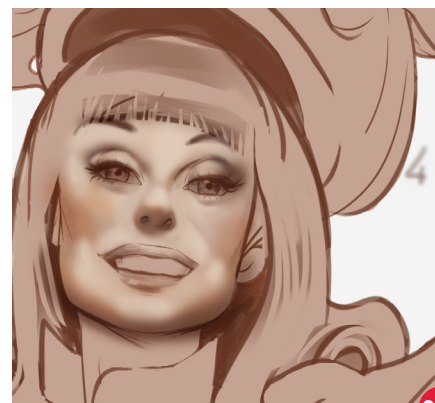
08 Skin color rendering: The first thing I do is choose the direction of the main source of lighting on my image. That is crucial, in



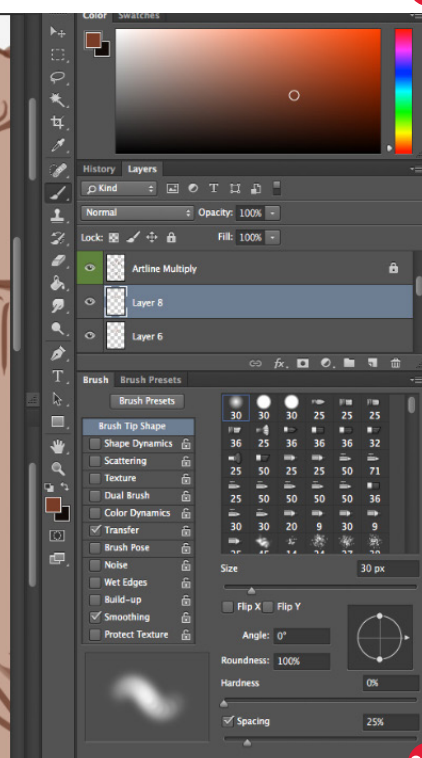
08a



08b



08c



08d

my opinion, because it guides me throughout the rendering process.

The next step after deciding on the light source direction, is marking the dark areas on the face (eyes, nose and jaw line) using a darker tone than the base color. To make those marks, I use the Soft Round brush with the Opacity set to 50%.

Now, it is time to make marks for the brighter areas on the face (always thinking about the direction of the light source). Again, I use the Soft Round brush with the Opacity set to 50%.

I also improve the face's framing by applying a warm shadow around it. This warm shadow is obtained from the base skin color then altering it to a slightly darker reddish tone.

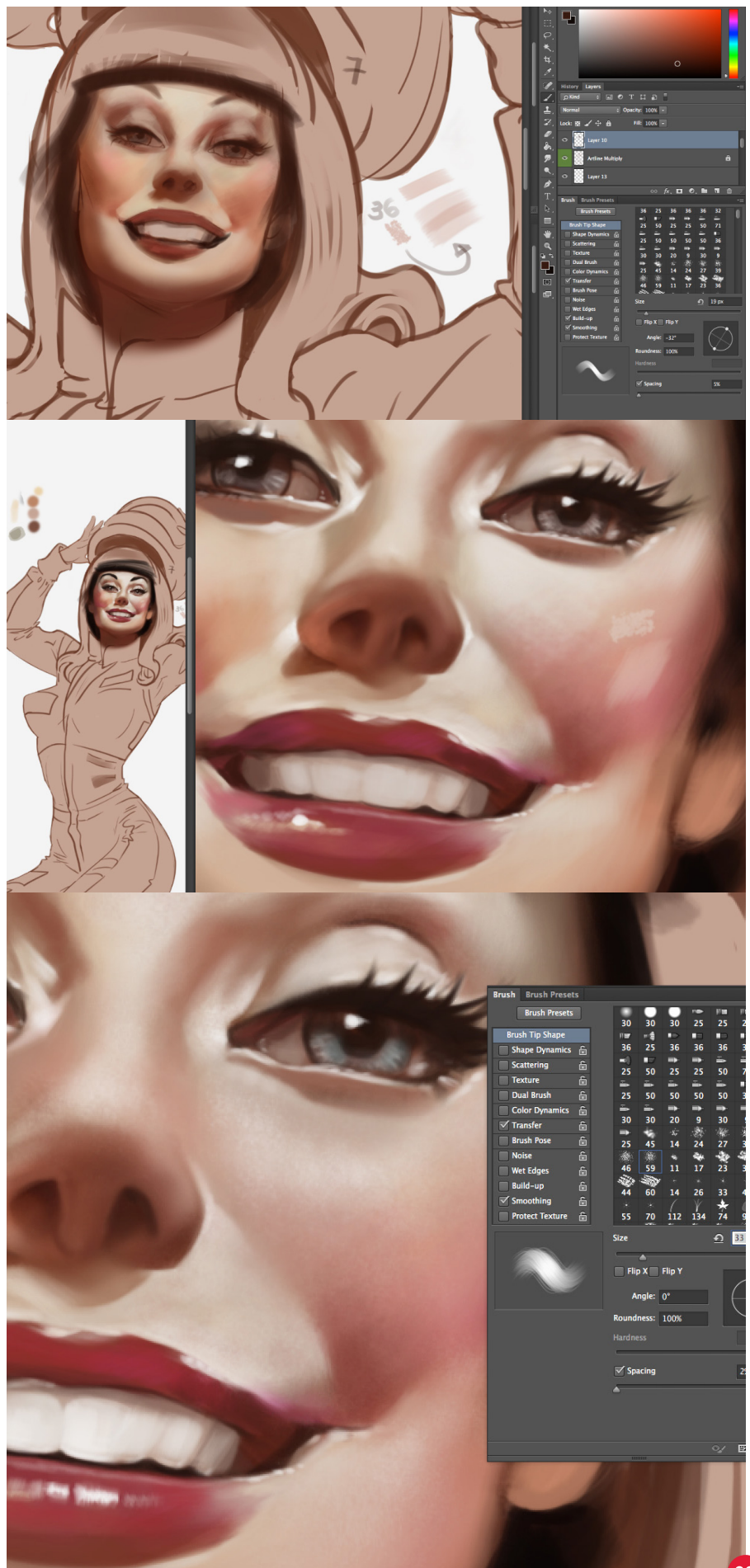
After marking the darker and brighter areas of the face and applying the warm shadow around the face, I add warmer skin tones by rendering bigger reddish areas, using the same Soft Round brush with the Opacity set to 50%.

Note: the initial rendering on the face is done in four steps: darker areas, brighter areas, warm shadow to enhance the framing of the face and adding the warmer (reddish colored) areas.

09 Improving face rendering: The idea of improving the rendering is working on the details of the face, such as the nose, eyes, mouth, lips, cheek and so on.

Those details bring the rendering to a more dimensional approach; it is like you are sculpting the face, giving it a slight 3D feel, which makes your painting pop and look more realistic.

With the brush number 36 (in the Photoshop brush library) set to an Opacity of 50% (there is no hardness control function enabled in this brush), I start rendering the details, 'sculpting' the areas on ▶



07 Laying down the base color

08a The main light source comes from the top-right corner

08b The dark/shadow areas

08c Painting in the highlights

08d Adding in warmer tones, especially to frame the face

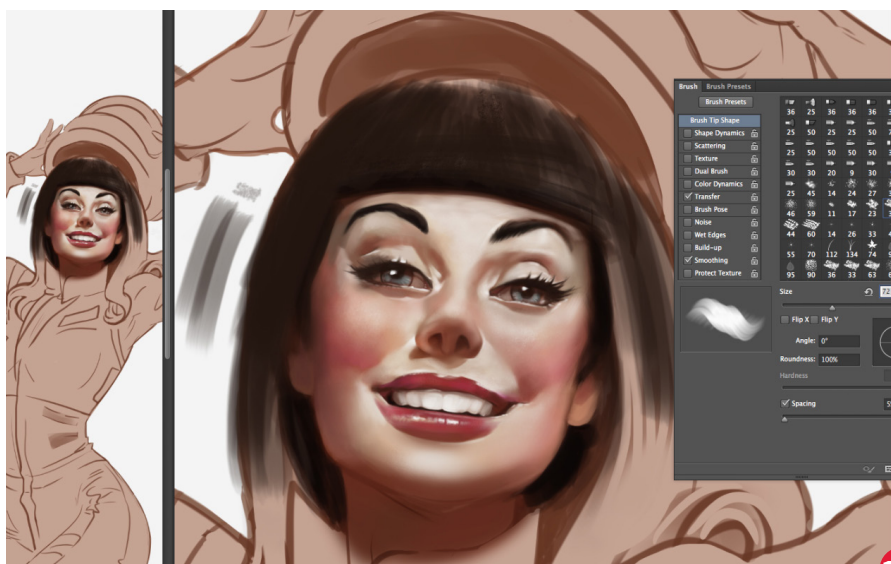
09 Blending the highlights and shadows together to create a 3D feel

her face, simulating the softness of this brush with my digital pen.

Handling the pressure applied with my digital pen on my tablet, I can make my strokes soft, keeping the painting as delicate as I wish.

Note: Brush number 36 has a rectangular shape, but in other Photoshop versions this could be different, so look for a similar shaped brush in your version.

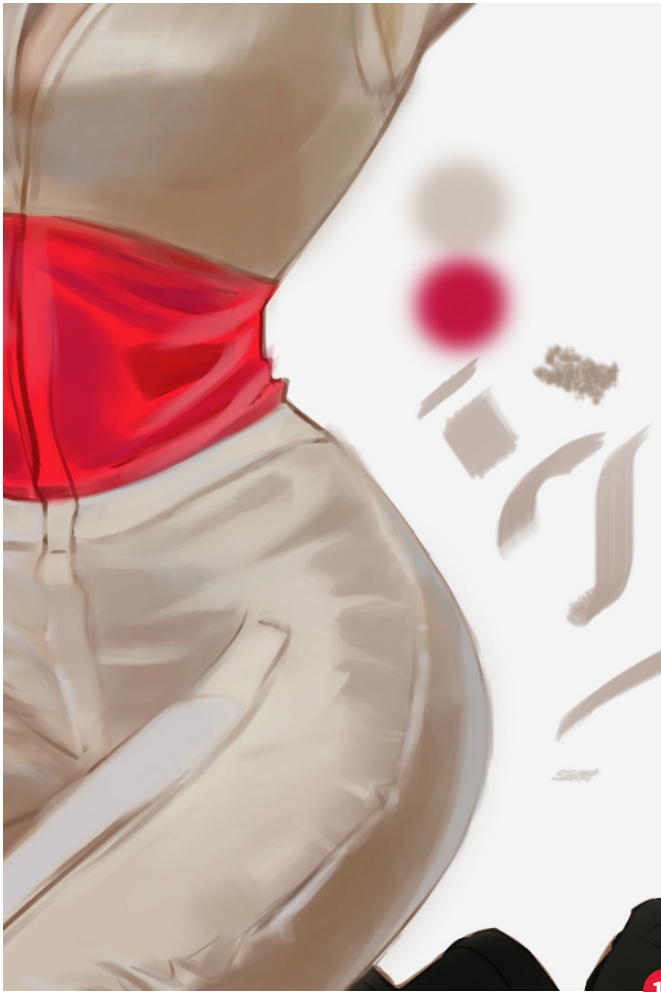
10 **Painting hair:** I decide to give my pin-up long black loose curly hair; however I am not using the black hue as the base color tone to start with. I decide to go for a lighter black tone to cover all her hair, and then for more of a traditional black tone to make all the shadows I



10a



10b



11

need around the framing of her face to simulate a sense of depth.

Still handling the same brush (brush number 36, Opacity set to 100%) I pick up a lighter black base tone and I apply it all over the hair by doing long and smooth strokes, following the direction of the sections of the hair, sometimes from top to bottom and sometimes from bottom to top.

Whether my strokes are top to bottom or vice versa, I always keep in mind the spots where the lights are catching the hair and the effect it has on the painting, which helps me to do the highlights in a more realistic way to simulate the waves.

To obtain those results I use another brush (brush number 24 with Opacity set to 90%) combining my strokes with the pressure I apply on my digital pen. That combination between the soft pressure on the digital pen and the opacity in the brush is essential to achieve the result I want.

11 Tailoring the costume: The overall color I define for my pin-up is a beige (C:24; M:26; Y:33; K:0) with a large horizontal red strip on her abdomen (C:18; M:100; Y:80; K:8) – but you can use another color set if you prefer,

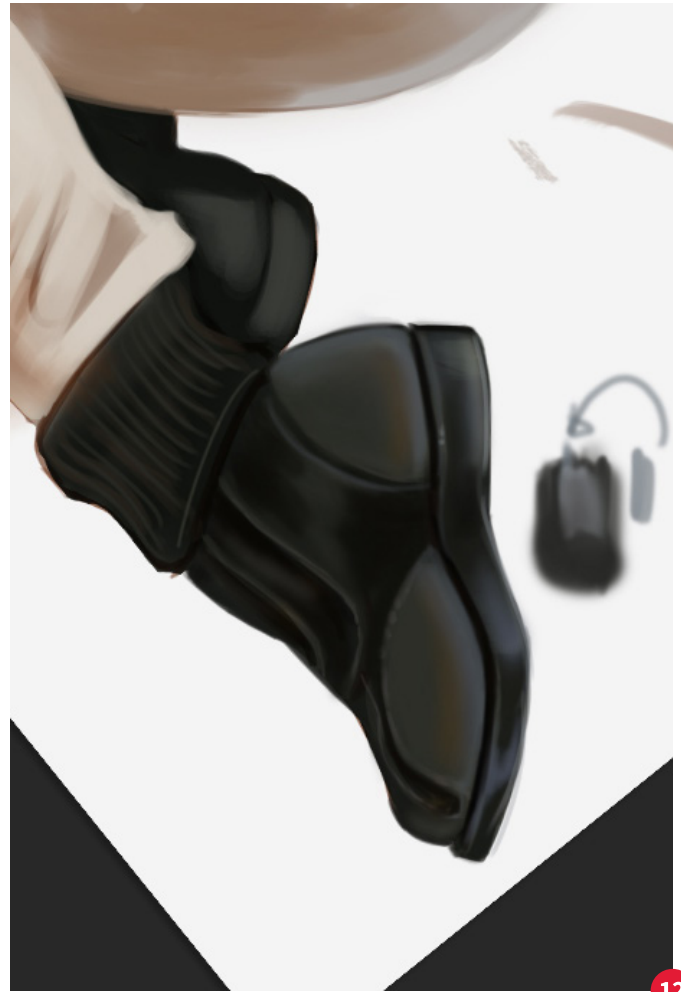
such as an American red, white and blue. Using the traditional Large Round airbrush with Opacity set to 100%, I apply the beige color all over the costume area and the red over her waist. After that, I come back to brush 36 with the Opacity varying between 50% up to 70% to mark the details and wrinkles on the costume.

I do the wrinkles by combining the pressure on the digital pen and the variation of the roundness diameter of the brush. Of course, the darker and lighter areas of the wrinkles are made by matching the direction of the light source on the overall's material.

Another point I think is worth noting is that I am not applying or simulating any texture on the costume. I prefer my pin-up costumes to be as vintage in style as possible.

12 Painting the shoes: In this step, I continue with the same process and idea of covering the shoe's whole area with a dark-base tone color.

I decide to go for a very dark green (C:71; M:64; Y:69; K:77) and I apply this color with the Round airbrush with the Opacity set to 100%.



12

When I finish covering all the shoes area, I check to see if there is any excessive color beyond the outline which I delete using the Eraser tool.

After that, I use the number 36 brush with the Opacity set to 50%, to create details, lights and shadows on the shoes. Her shoes in my concept are made with a combination of leather and rubber materials.

To create a result such as rubber areas on the shoes (and we have to remember that rubber is more opaque than the leather, so we have to avoid shiny spots on it), I use a brighter tone of the dark-green base color, and I do any possible lights and volumes on it by using a grayish tone from this same color with the Soft Round brush, Opacity set to 50%. ►

10 Creating a wavy effect with a base color and highlights

11 Adding the color and highlights to the costume

12 Painting in material details on the shoes

13 Painting the helmet: I decide to paint the helmet as an opaque material in a red color (C: 24, M: 100, Y: 68, K: 14) to match the costume's waist color.

The initial process is the same as before. We need to apply the color on the helmet by using the Round airbrush, opacity set to 100% (bigger size is better).

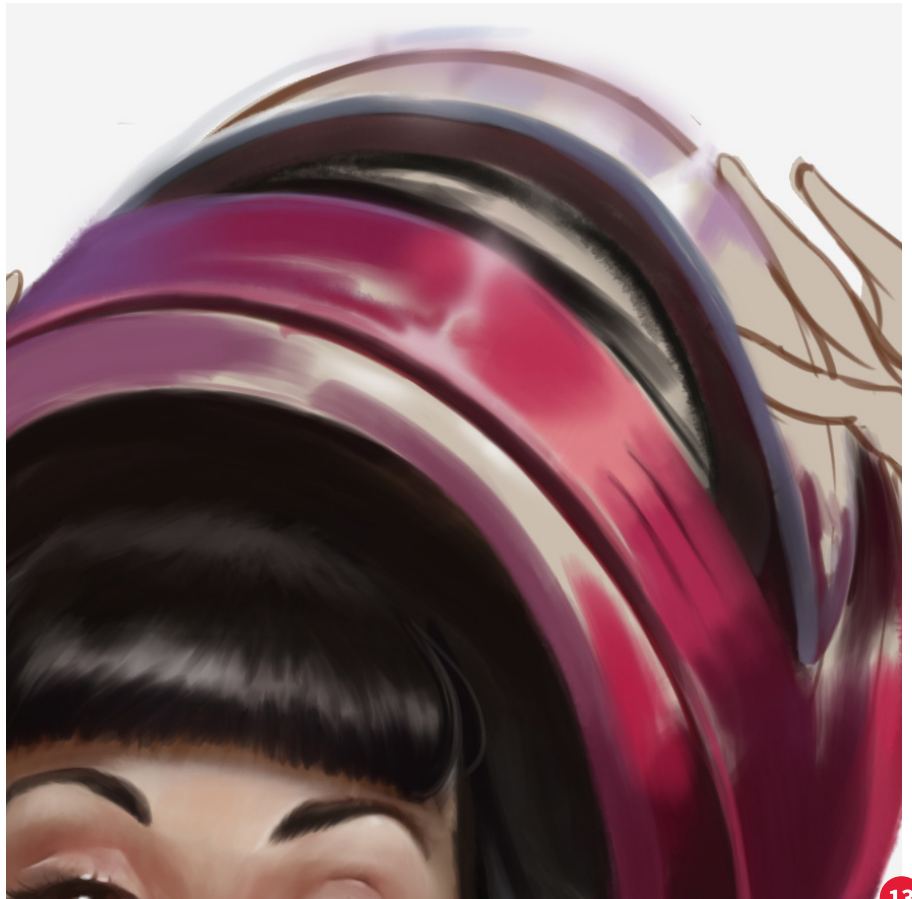
Once we have the helmet's base area all covered, I choose the spots where there are highlights and shadows according to the main light source, which I achieve by applying a lighter tone of the red for lights and a darker tone of red for shadows with the same Soft Round airbrush (Opacity set to 50%).

After that, I switch to the number 36 brush (and set the Opacity to 50%) to create some more details, such as the grooves for the tear-off shield and the ventilation system near the bottom section of the helmet.

14 Painting the tear-off shield: The tear-off shield is made of a transparent plastic material such as Plexiglas (it is not glass material) and because of that the light reflection is a little different than on the traditional glass.

I paint it in a separate layer (above the helmet's layer) with the Soft Round airbrush and Opacity set to 20% (remember it is a transparent material) using a white bluish color (C: 36, M: 21, Y: 6; K: 0).

In another new layer (above the tear-off shield layer) I paint the light reflection on the tear-off



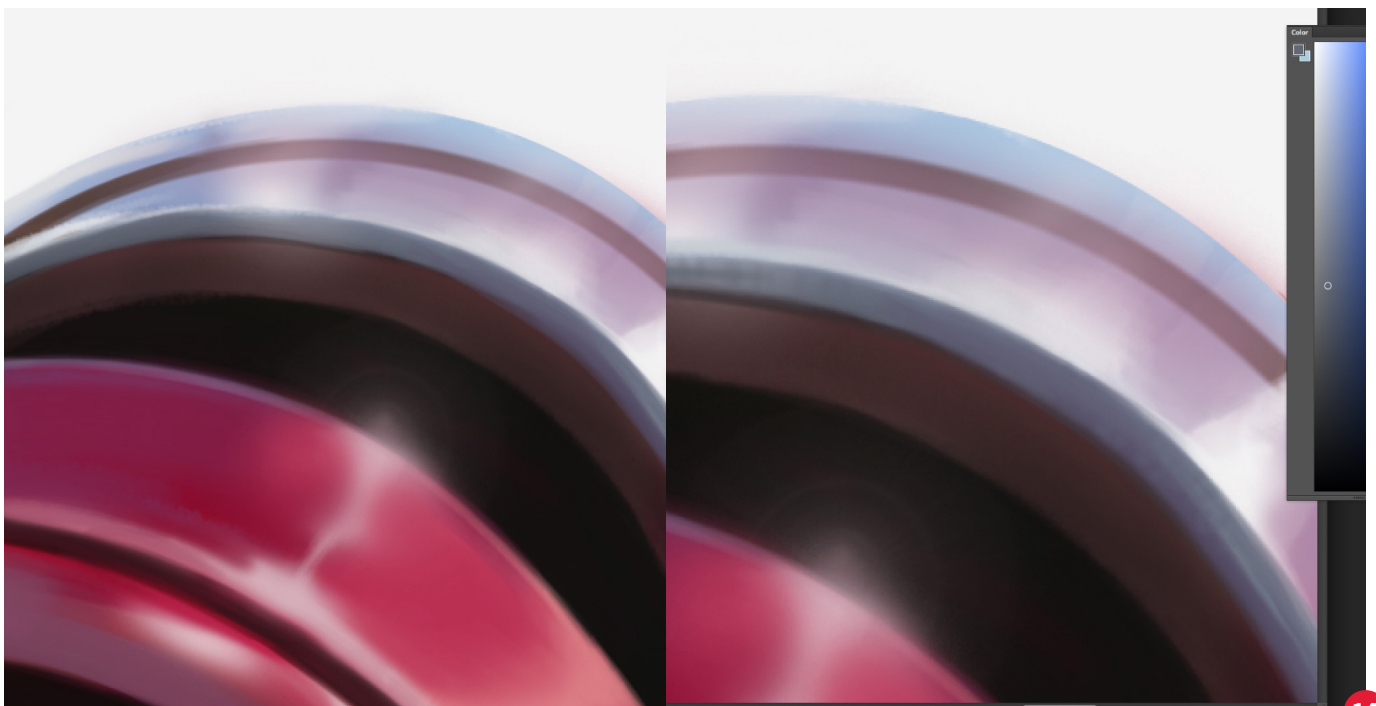
13

13 Adding the base color, highlights and shadows to the helmet

14 Final details and creating a transparent effect

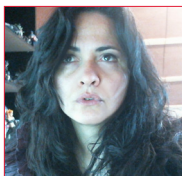
shield by using the Soft Round airbrush with Opacity set to 40% and an almost white tone (C: 6; M: 5; Y: 4; K: 0) on the areas where I know the material catches the light.

Now, I use the Eraser tool in the format of the Soft Round airbrush to erase some parts of that white color to create a more realistic spotlight effect. ●



14

The Artist



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108

Issue 108 | December 2014

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Step-by-step
tutorial inside!

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fantasy creatures from
your imagination

Craft concept car designs

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to get you started with your own
vehicle designs

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The Artist



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Software Used:
Photoshop

Markus Lovadina, aka malo, is currently working as a senior concept artist, as well as a freelance concept artist/illustrator for the games and movie industry.



Craft concept car designs

Markus Lovadina demonstrates how to design and paint post-apocalyptic vehicles in Photoshop. From the initial line drawings to adding grungy textures, Markus reveals expert tips to create stunning car concepts! ▶



Discover techniques to design and paint a post-apocalyptic concept car...

When I start a concept, gathering references is one of the important starting points for me – this will put you in the right mood and you also will see what has been already done. In terms of post-apocalyptic design, there will be loads of rusted metal. The CGtextures.com site is a great source and mostly free to use. Here are a couple of images that I gathered from that site to use as a mood board.

01 First rough sketch: There are a couple of ways to start a concept – mood boards, loose pencil sketches, thumbnails or even play around with a 3D application. In this case I started with a simple and loose sketch. As mentioned above, I already had a clear vision of the design and style in mind.

After gathering a couple of references, I start to draw in the first lines of the car. When I draw or paint I always use my second monitor for the references. Now I pick the standard Round brush with pressure setting (Shape Dynamics > Size Jitter Control: Pen Pressure) and start to sketch the base shape of the car. My focus now is just on the overall shape – no details, no gadgets – just the shape of the car.

02 Sketching in the modified elements: As you can see, the sketch is pretty loose



and far away from being precise. I'm still focusing on the overall shape of the original car.

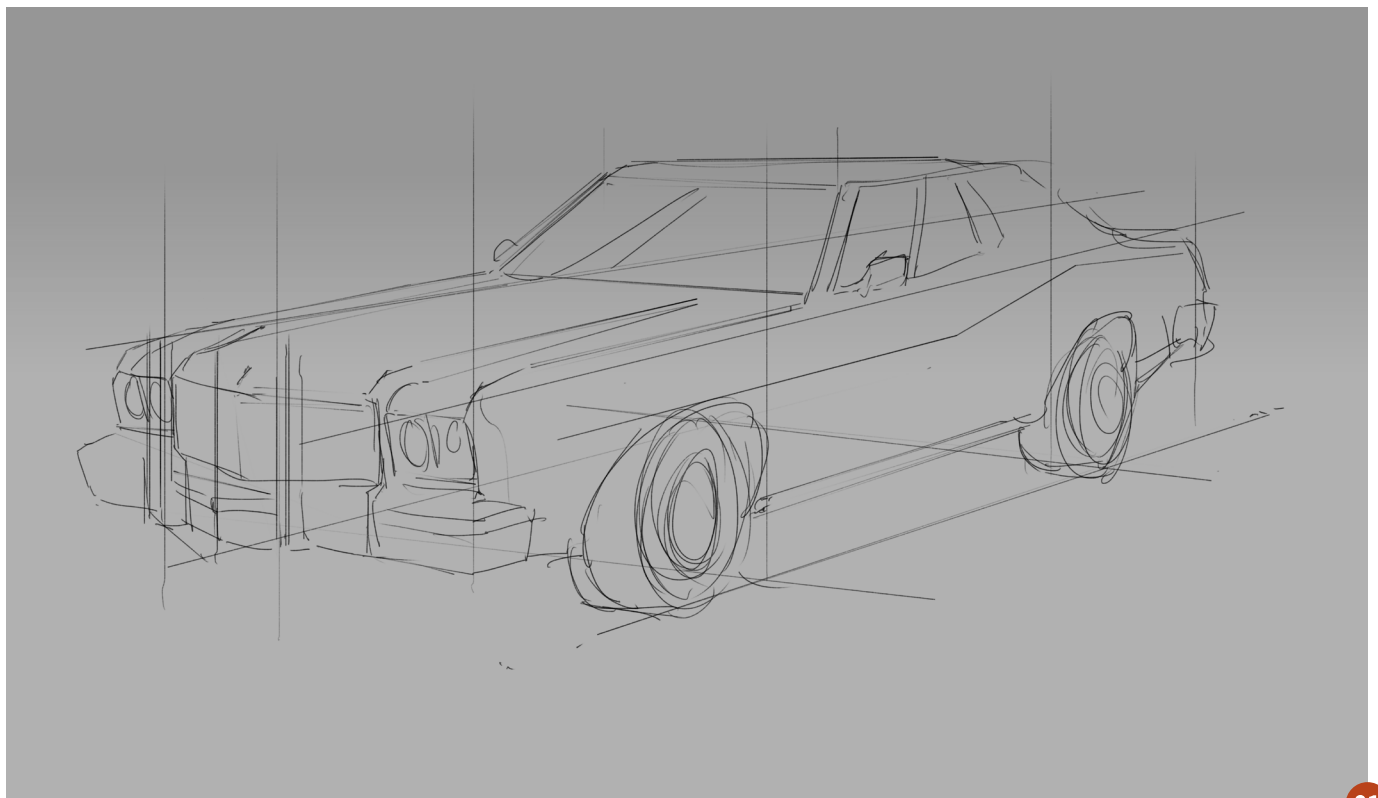
Since everything is now in place, I'm able to bring in the first post-apocalyptic elements. Those elements are still rough and just give me ideas of what could be added and what will work. Or better said – what will be believable.

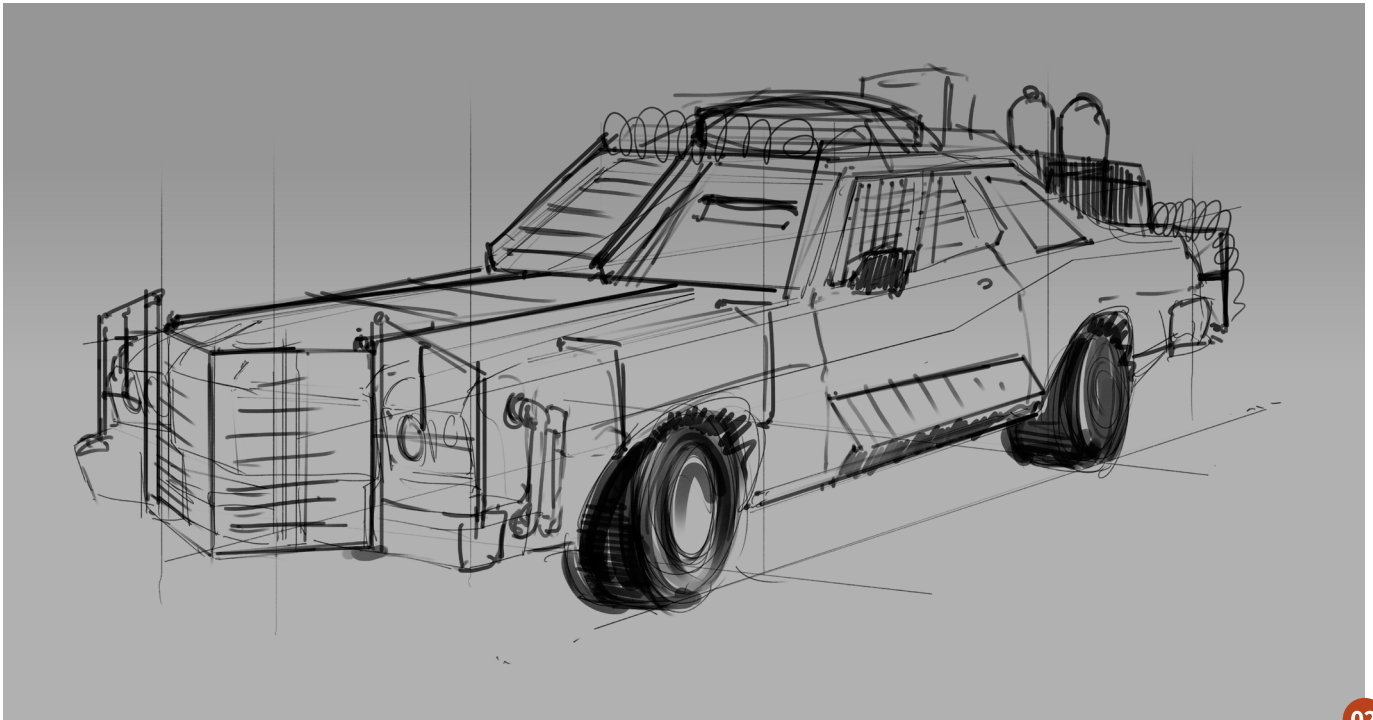
I draw the elements the same way I did the initial sketch – with a simple Round brush, just set to a larger size to see the shapes better. There is no real rule on how to work as efficiently as possible, but for me and on this particular concept, I really

enjoy 'scribbling' around. Later on, there will be enough time for me to focus on the color, details and textures.

I paint in rough lines that suggest barbed wire, tanks, and additional metal plates. All these elements should be attached to the car as if they were collected somewhere and then randomly fixed on the car.

Happy with the rough ideas, I am able to move on to my first color pass.





02



03

03 Blocking in the first colors: Now happy with my line drawing, I create a new layer. I block in the colors with a round textured brush. I will use this same brush to paint the entire concept, this enables me to focus on painting and not have to worry about what brush to use next.

When I pick the colors, I still have my mood board open. The colors are pretty much inspired

by the huge engine reference. Post-apocalyptic aesthetics already tend to give a nice color palette: red, yellow, brown, green, blue and some hint of purple.

When I block in my colors I mostly use the Color Picker to get different shades. If a brush is set to Transparency and you paint over other strokes, this area has enough information to pick your next color. ►

01 I already figured out the design in my head – so it was now time to sketch it out on the canvas

02 I modify the car into something post-apocalyptic

03 Picking the right color at the beginning of the painting will speed up the process



04



05

04 First details for the base shape: I keep painting with the same brush and on the same layer. There is no reason to have multiple layers – at least not for now. Painting with this brush already gives me some nice subtle details and textures. After blocking in all colors it's time to define the light direction.

The light is coming from somewhat top left – which means I have to have the darkest area on the far back (right) of the car. There will be some ambient lights later on, but let's keep it simple for now. I create a new layer and paint some dark gray below the car for my first hint of a shadow. I then use the Smudge tool to soften the edges.

05 First scrap details: Now the main base shape of the car is done and the colors are set. It is now time for the fun part – all the scrap details.

I create a new layer and duplicate the initial sketch. The sketch is then put on top of the color block and the transparency reduced to about



06

20%. This gives me enough details to start with the proper detailing. You should always keep in mind, when designing a post-apocalyptic car, that all elements are gathered and attached randomly to the car; there is no real purpose for most of the elements. Except a few, such as the battering ram at the front of the car or the armor plates on the front window.

On a new layer, I start to paint in the rough shapes of the pipe, the battering ram and the framework of the front window. All made with a simple Round brush. I'm still not focusing on details, because I know that most of the details will come with the textures I'll use later on.

06 First textures and more details: More fun to come. As I said, I was trying to paint the whole car with just the Round brush, but at this point I use a customized brush for the fence on the side windows. To make the fence brush fit I create a new layer, paint in the fence and transform it, so that it fits the perspective.

Then I create a new layer – click on the previous layer (with the fence) to get a selection; I hide the selection by pressing Ctrl+H, switch to the newly created layer and paint over the fence area with a brighter color. I remove the selection and erase areas that aren't necessary with a textured eraser.

The good thing about the textured eraser is that the texture keeps and deletes areas randomly. You'll never get the same result with a non-textured eraser. As you can see, there is a hint of texture on the side of the car. I use a texture



07

from CGtextures.com and set the layer to Soft Light. After that, I reduce the transparency until it has just a hint of texture/rust. I use the same technique to achieve the texture on the bonnet.

07 Textures, textures, textures: I keep picking textures for the car. It is absolutely necessary that the car will get a rusty look. A highly polished car will be not believable.

To get a more DIY feeling, I add some sort of plastic bag on the roof of the car. This could contain a gun or just randomly collected scraps. The bag is painted on a new layer and with the same textured round brush I used before. You can already see the noise from the texture. I always try to keep my light direction in mind. A quick lightbulb sketch could be quite helpful. All the textures you see on the car are again from CGtextures.com, which is a great resource of good quality textures and images. The main reason to

add so much texture to the concept is to get a realistic, dirty and used feeling.

I make the hazard stripes on a new layer. I use the Rectangular Marquee tool, fill the selection ▶

04 Finishing the color pass for the base shape of the car

05 Blocking in the first details of the post-apocalyptic elements and playing around with additional ideas

06 We are getting closer to the look of a post-apocalyptic car concept. More scrap is added and the first textures are applied

07 Adding quite a lot of different textures to the car

with a bright yellow, tilt the selection about 36 or so degrees and duplicate the layer a few times. I then merge the layers and create a new one below and fill it with black. The rear of the car has some kind of tank; this could be filled with water or fuel. I think it is quite important to have some sort of story at the back of your head. If you have to pitch this concept to your art director, you should have at least one or two answers ready.

08 Final details and color tweaks: With pretty much everything in place it is time to get some final touches on the car. I merge all the layers— except the shadows below the car and the background – to one. I make a selection by holding Ctrl and clicking on the layer of the car. With it selected, I pick the Color Balance effect from the bottom of the layer palette and start to modify the colors. One good thing about Color Balance is that you can modify lights, mid tones and shadows separately.

The car was a tad too dark and too moody. So I increase the yellows and reds in the lights and reduce the blues in the mid-tones, as well as in the shadows. I use the same selection to brighten up the whole image with the Levels correction option. You'll find it in the same spot you'd find the Color Balance.

Happier now with the look, I create another layer and paint in some loose versions of a skull, which will be used as a decorative element for the battering ram and the side plate of the car.

09 Final touches: I think I have the feeling that I'm pretty much done. The concept is detailed enough to sell the idea or could be used as a base for further explorations. The colors match the location idea I had/have in mind and the car has a post-apocalyptic feel to it.

The next step would be to decide if this will be used for any military activities or if it is just a scout car. You see it's a simple concept, but it already gives a couple of possibilities.

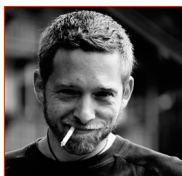
I merge the car layers again and duplicate the layer. After that, I set the layer to Color Dodge to get some nice highlights. 100% is a bit strong, so I reduce the transparency to about 20-25%.

It is a possibility that this concept will be given to a 3D artist to be modeled, so I did some loose line drawings of the front and the back view of the car. Just to give some hints and ideas to the modeler. Most of the information is already provided by the orthographic view of the car. ●



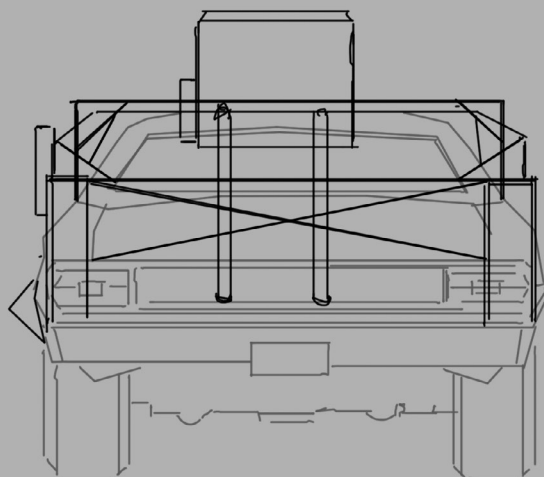
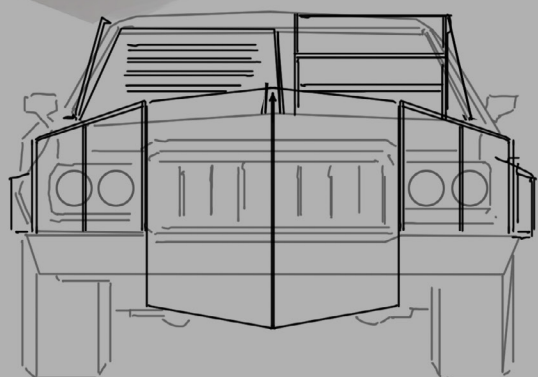


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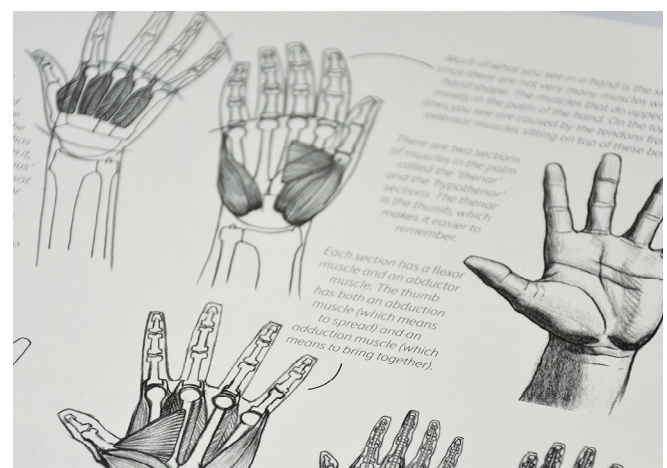
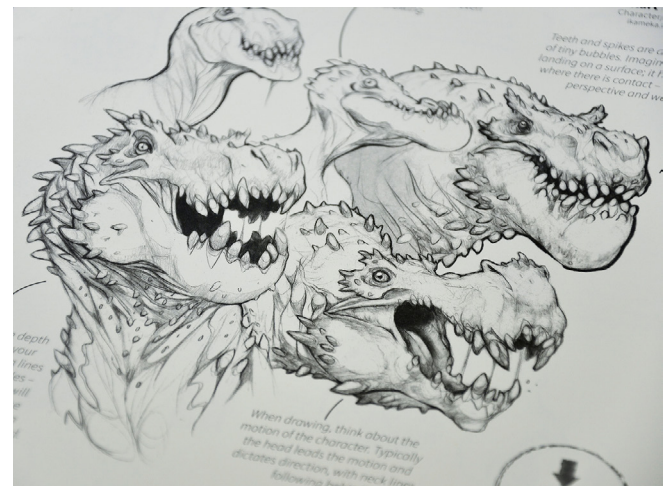
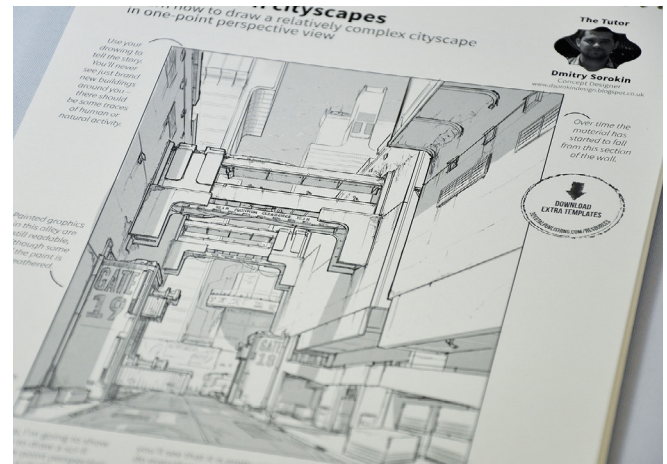
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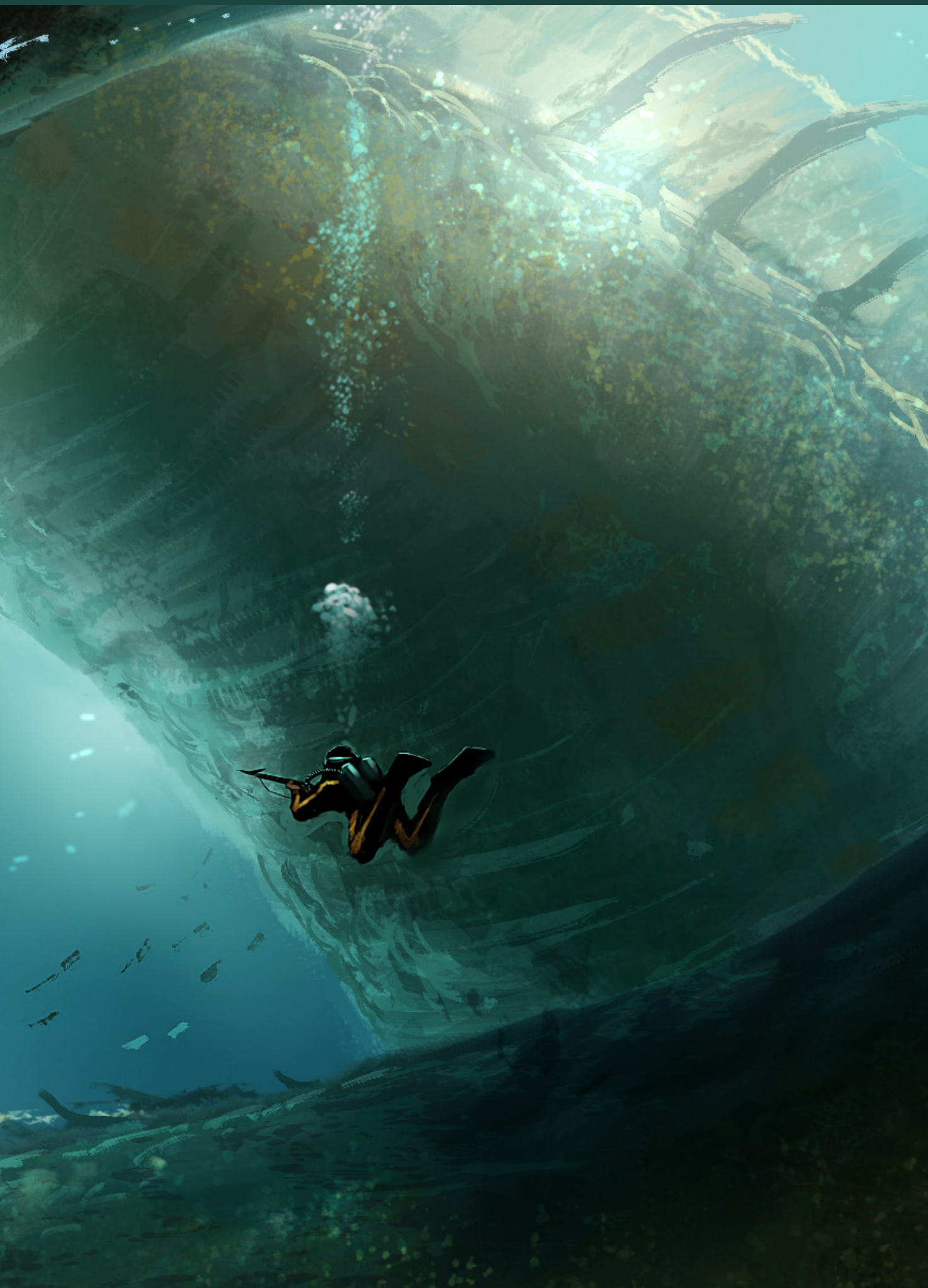
Photoshop

Denis Loebner is a concept artist from Berlin, Germany. He currently works as a concept artist at Innogames GmbH in Hamburg.

Speed paint underwater scenes

Denis Loebner shares his techniques for painting 30-minute concepts for the Facebook group Daily Spitpaint. He guides us through the step-by-step process he used to paint his image, *The Eel* ▶





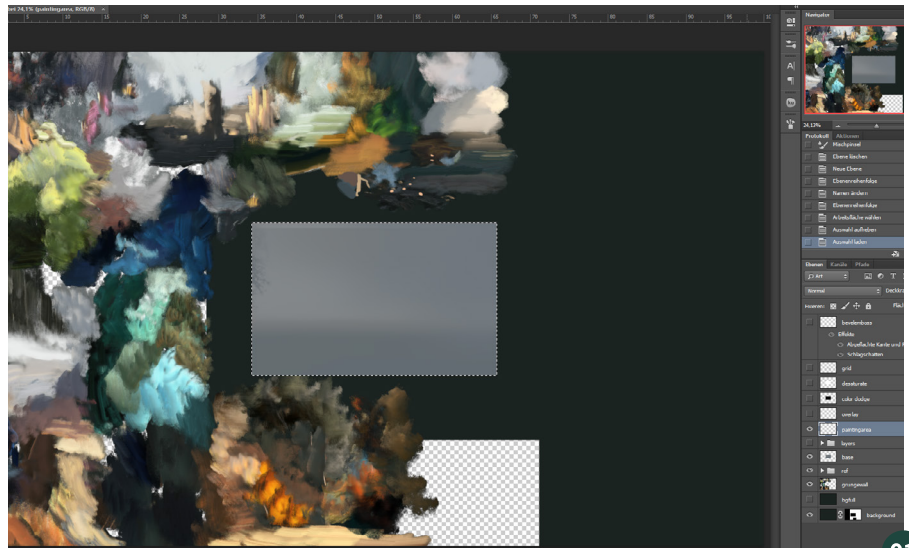
Discover top tips for painting 30-minute concepts...

I created the image *The Eel* for the Facebook group Daily Spitpaint. The rules for creating these specific drawings are:

- You have to illustrate one of the 3-5 topics that are given each day
- You must not exceed 30 minutes of time working on it
- You must not use any photos in a direct way

So writing this quick tutorial already took me way longer than actually drawing the image. Splitting it into logical helpful steps was also not easy given they rarely exceed four minutes of time each. In this tutorial, I will briefly outline a few of the techniques I often use for creating these spitpaints; for example some use of the mixer brush, custom shapes or a Color Dodge layer.

I came about the idea for this image by Googling images for underwater caves. I stumbled across one in which the camera was shooting a diver from the inside of an underwater cave, and first seeing the thumbnail I thought, these cave walls could easily be a winding body of a giant eel. Of course I had to draw a moray eel because they look so cool.



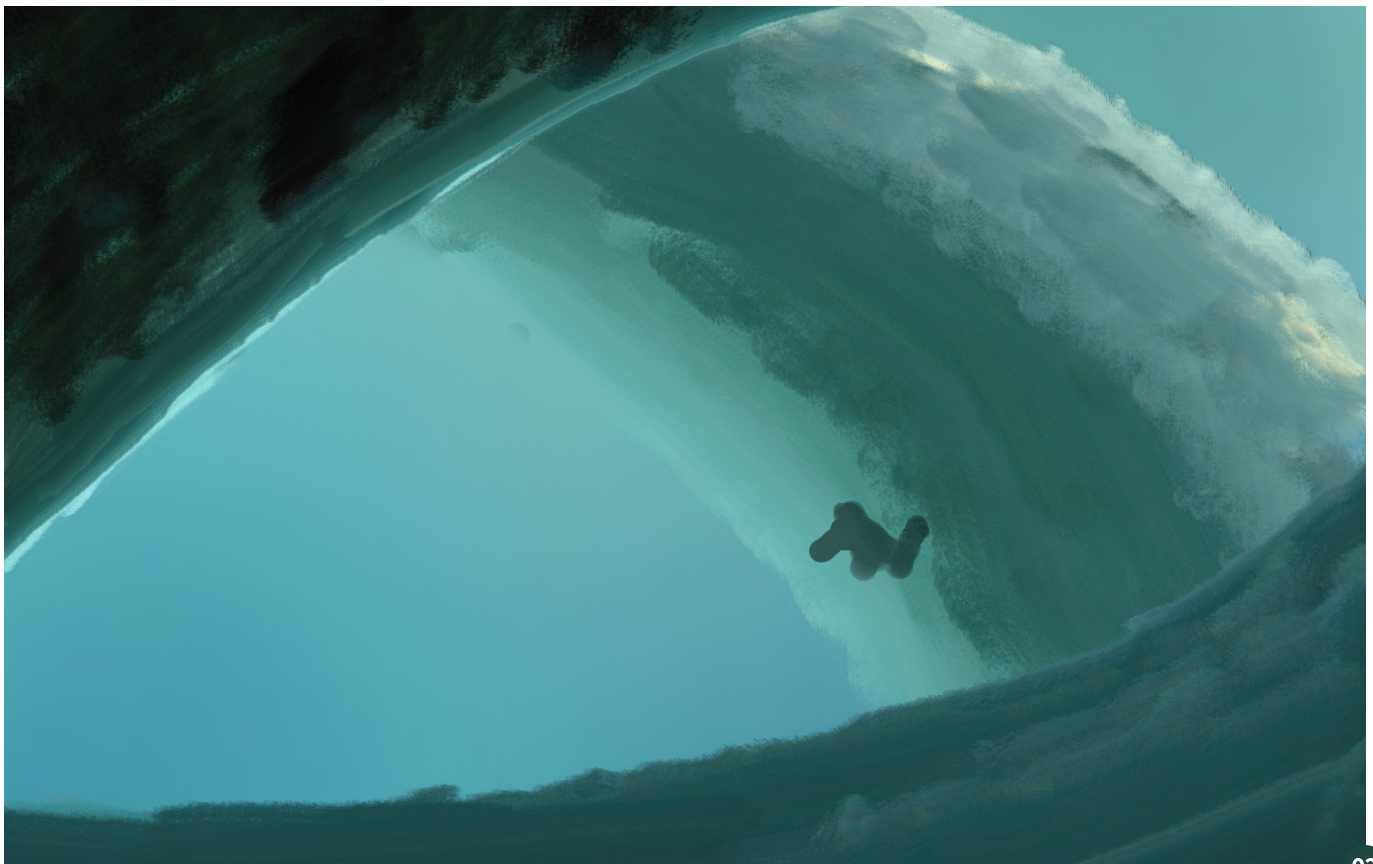
01

01 Startup: In order to work comfortably and spend as little time as possible on layer settings and such, I created this Photoshop file. It contains a range of layers I will eventually use, as well as a grid, a specific canvas area in the middle to paint on, a range of grungy color spots that I picked from older spitpaints of mine and an area of free space to place reference images on.

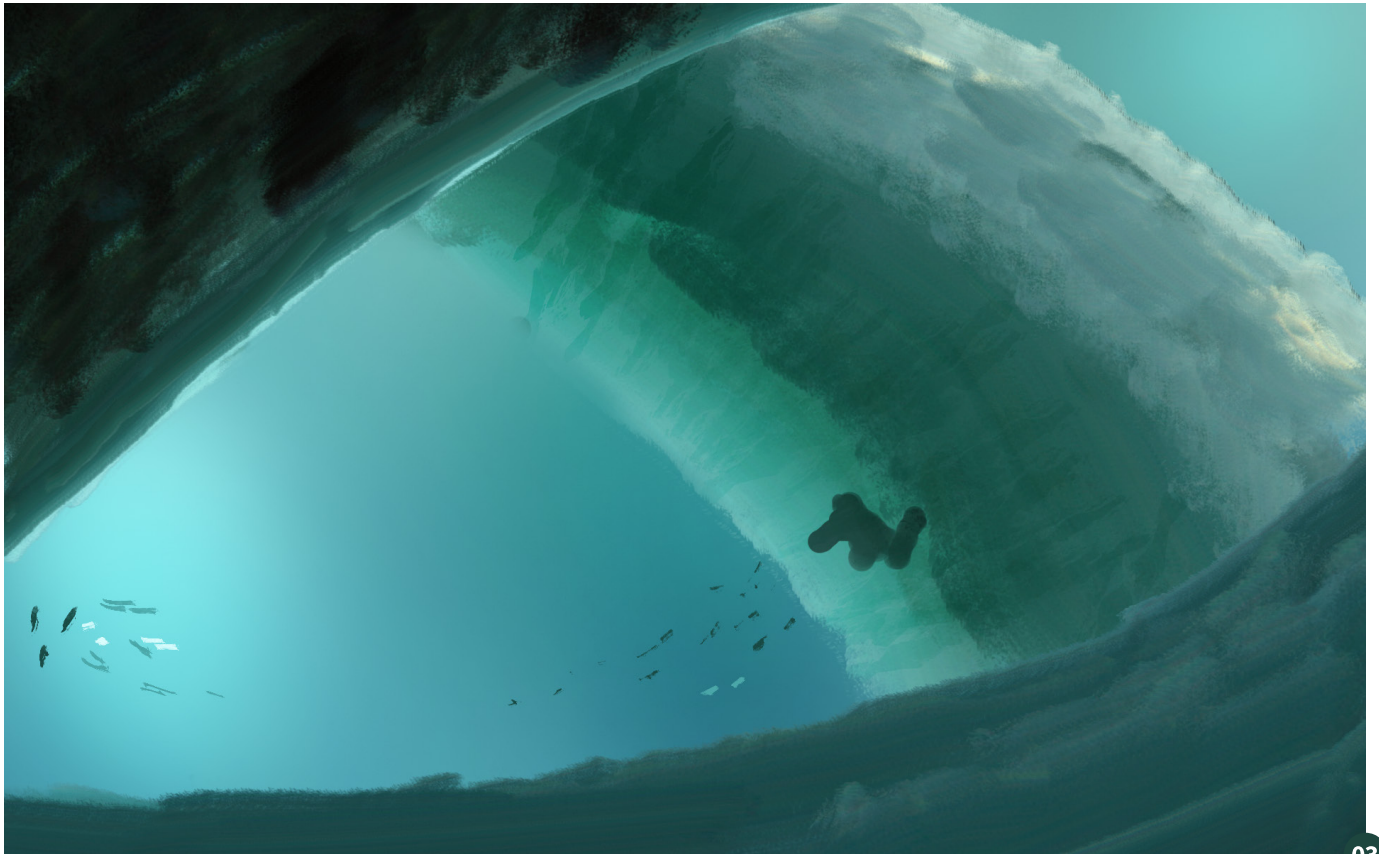
02 Starting the spitpainting: Before I start the timer I usually have a solid image in my head. I like experimental drawing, but if I want to achieve something solid in 30 minutes I don't really have time to experiment, make

mistakes or do time-consuming groundwork like line drawings or grayscale images. For this first step I merely blocked out the eel's body on three different layers using the Mixer brush set to dry/thick and a custom brush that was made to resemble rough paintstrokes. I also added a marker for the diver at the point of attention according to the golden ratio.

03 First details: This was a rather quick step. I added in some fish with just a few dots, picking color from my grungy color palette. I also sketched the placement of soft lights and light shafts I planned for this image.



02

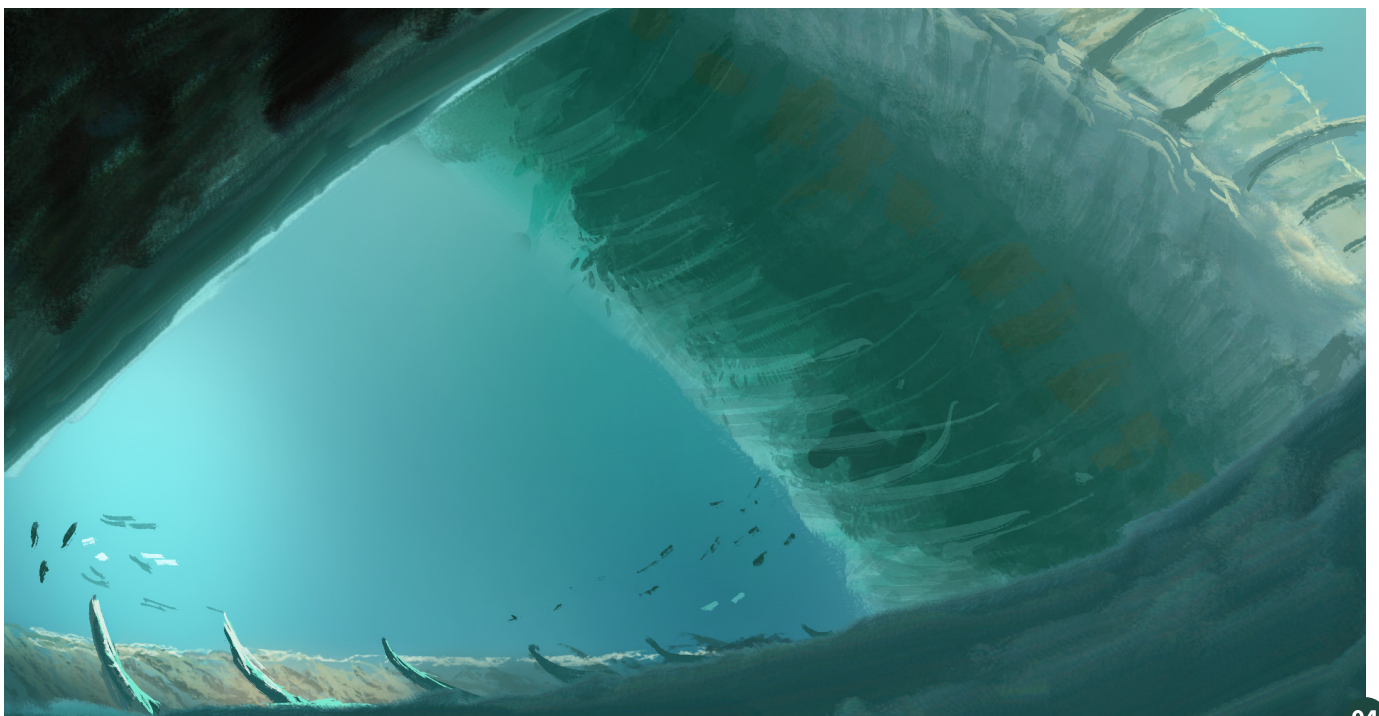


03

04 Detailing it out: At this moment I had a good overview of what I wanted to do in the given time. I knew I needed two points of interest: the eel's head and the diver – the rest of the image could be very loose and I could just draw until the time ran out. First I drew the fins to define the eel's silhouette a bit better, and get a nice range of contrast from which I could color pick comfortably to paint the head of the eel. ►

“Overlay is usually great to get some quick translucence or subsurface scattering”

- 01 My typical default Photoshop file for spitpainting
- 02 Blocking out the prominent shapes
- 03 Adding some details and lighting
- 04 Adding the first major details



04

05 The head: I found a nice reference image for a moray eel that had a strong highlight on his head due to some overexposure. First, I blocked out the raw shape, and then

picked some darker and lighter blues from the contrast area I just created, and from the shadowy parts of the eel's body to shade the head. Then I picked some brown and orange from

the color reference and some cyan from the fins to give the head some coloring. At last I added the highlighted area with a dots brush, and also some teeth.



05



06

06 Second point of interest: As the diver is comparably small I did not have to invest too much time in detailing him. I only knew that he had to have the highest contrast, so I blocked out his silhouette and only filled in some details like his tanks and the stripes that define his pose. I originally planned to give him a flashlight blinding the eel, but instead I gave him a harpoon as I was quite happy with how the lighting for the eel worked. I then added some light shafts to reduce the contrast around the two main subjects.

07 Adding some textures: Here I used a custom shape which I once made from the image of a toad. I often use this specific vector shape for vegetation, mushrooms or murky fluids like swamps. I set the layer on which I placed it to Overlay and then simply copied the layer, while using the Transform tool to fit it to the eels shape.

08 Highlights and shadows: The time was nearly over so I stopped the painting and went to work on the lighting. I used a layer set to Overlay to darken certain parts and lighten a few others. Overlay is usually great to get some quick translucence or subsurface scattering. After that I used a Color Dodge layer, initially filled with black, to create some specular highlights and some overexposure where the lights hit.

09 A little time left: Usually my last step is to use an Unsharp mask on certain areas



07

of the image to increase the contrast of important parts, or create random texture effects as a result of the former use of grungy custom brushes.

However my music was still running (I fill a playlist with 28 minutes of music and do the wrap up when the music stops) so I could add a few extra details like the harpoon I forgot and some bubbles. I shaped some of the bubble clouds into rough arrows to lead the viewer's eye to the diver. ●

- 05** Painting the head
- 06** Adding the diver to where he belongs
- 07** Using custom shapes for texturing
- 08** Using a Color Dodge and an Overlay layer for better lighting
- 09** Unsharp mask and some last second details



08

DL

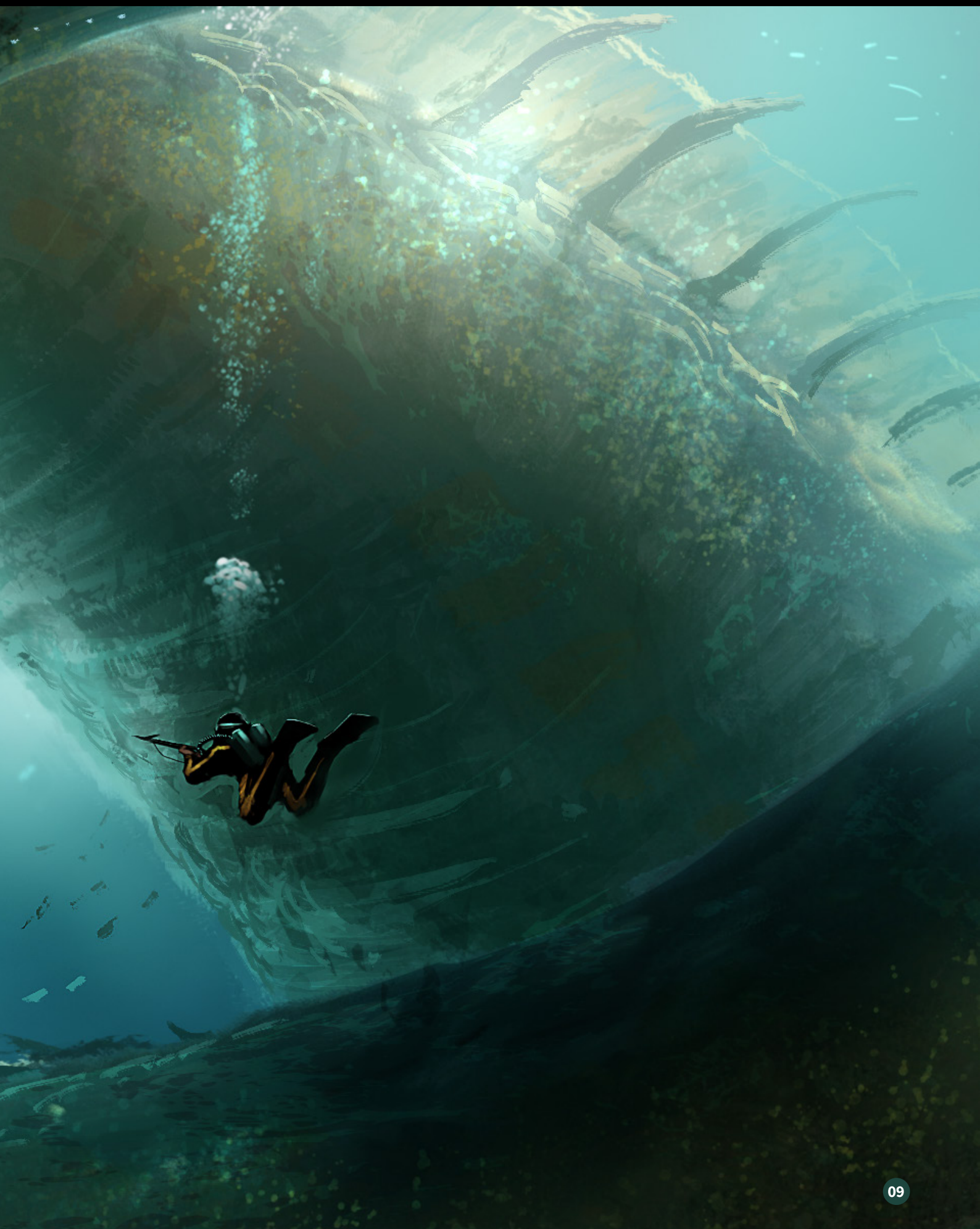
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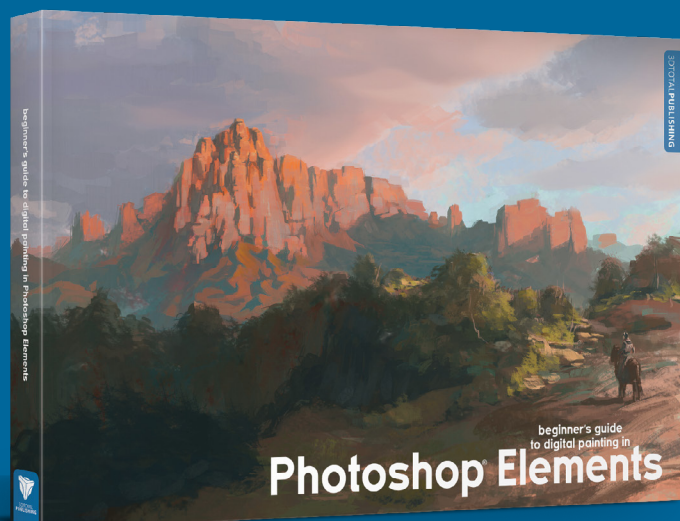


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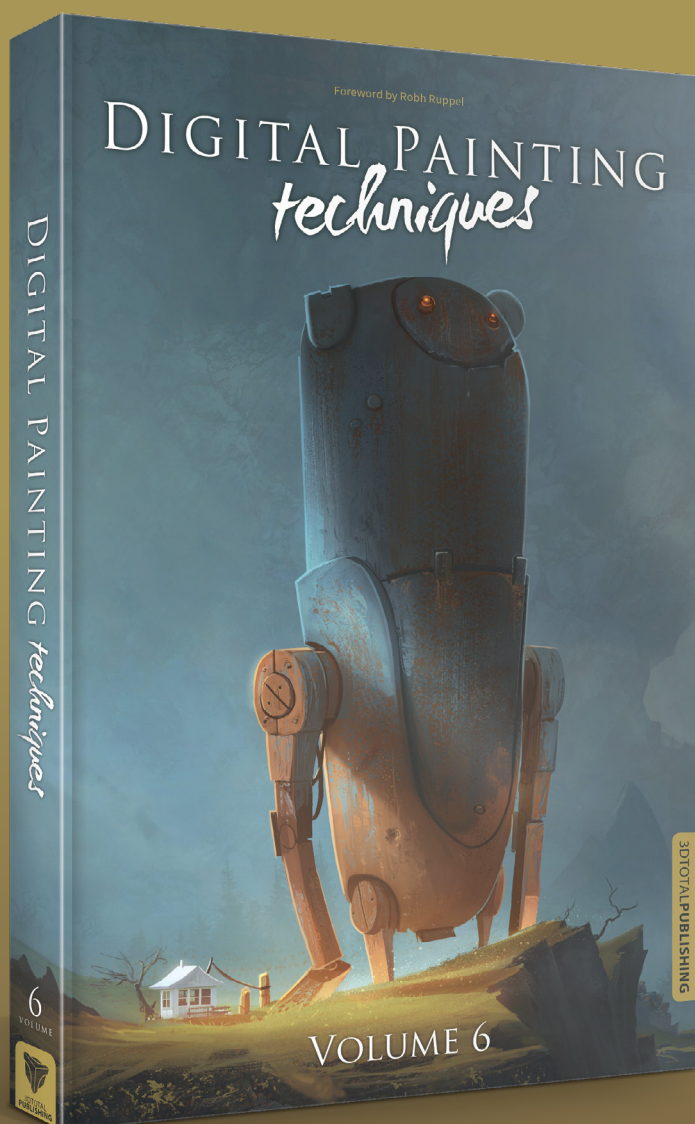
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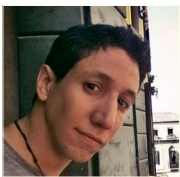
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The Artist



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Software Used:

Photoshop

Jonathan Guzi is a concept artist currently living in San Francisco, CA. He freelances for the film and games industry, and is currently working on an upcoming project for No Look Productions.

Create atmospheric interior scenes

Jonathan Guzi reveals techniques to incorporate photos and 3D objects to create an atmospheric action shot of an aircraft interior. He shares his workflow step-by-step, as he explains his approach to lighting, color and photo editing ▶





- The value sketch has all the information I need to begin painting, although certain elements such as the soldiers will change



Read on to discover techniques for crafting an impressive interior scene...

In this tutorial I will show you my process for creating an atmospheric finished interior shot that can be used as a concept for film or games. Starting from a black-and-white thumbnail, I will layer on photo textures from free texture sites such as CGTextures.com and my own personal library, and paint in atmospheric effects to create our final mood.

When I first started this image, the only idea I started off with was putting soldiers in some sort of abandoned or ruined environment, and the image developed from there. I will explain the basic steps of how to organize your layers as well as how I approach lighting, color and photo editing techniques. The trick is putting it all together in a way that follows what you

originally intended, and not let the photos dictate what your image will look like.

Additionally, I will be using a little bit of 3D for one of the steps, although I would like to stress that for an image like this it isn't really necessary. Hopefully I can also offer a few tips on how to approach your work in general, and ways to work quickly and efficiently.

01 Reference gathering and initial sketch: Before I start an image like this, I usually gather as much reference as I can before I start anything. Sometimes this can even take hours, but luckily I already have a relatively large library of reference images. It's a good idea to keep your own reference library, as this can save you precious time on an assignment. After finding an image of an abandoned airplane interior that inspires me, I feel like I have enough to begin.

At this point I know that I want to have strong lighting coming in from the windows, so I establish the basic values by painting light in loosely with a Soft brush set to Screen mode, simplifying the image as much as possible. I'm not too worried at all about perspective or details at this point, although I will occasionally paste in part of a photo and desaturate it (a quick shortcut for this is Shift+Ctrl+U), and paint over it.

02 Further exploration: While the image is still grayscale, it's important to try out as many different ideas as you can with the time you have. Here, I thought I might try to add more drama by changing the poses of the soldiers, as well as experiment with some overgrowth and adding a bit more texture. Ultimately, I decide that it isn't too important for me right now to figure out the characters in depth, so I just leave them for now. ►



01

- Adding more textures and experimenting with the composition and layout



02

I also decide that I don't like having too much overgrowth. I work fast, not caring about my layers at this point. Even though I'm only showing one image for this step, this is probably one of the most important stages, since it's the part where you figure out what your final road map will be. Spend as much time as you need on this step until you're satisfied.

03 Beginning to overlay photos: Now it's time to start organizing our layers and incorporating all the photo reference that we've gathered. I merge all the layers I have so far (Ctrl+Shift+E) as this will be my base. I start by literally pasting in parts of photos that I've gathered, to establish the colors and textures.

I'll use the Transform tool (Ctrl+T) on the photos I cut out in order to properly distort and skew them into my current perspective. I group all of

these photos into a textures folder so that I know exactly where they are. I always like to label and color code my groups for easy access (you can right click on the group to pick a color for it).

04 More texturing and perspective
check: Establishing your perspective should usually be the first thing you do, but things don't always work out in order. I create a fairly basic one-point perspective, and for the floor I use a brush that creates a grid, which I then skew into perspective.

An important thing to keep in mind in all of your images is camera angle, since this will have a huge influence on your perspective, and if it will look 'right'. For this shot, we would have to use a wide angle lens to capture that much of an airplane interior. Therefore, things will recede more dramatically in order to capture the full

frame of the shot. I also find an image that I like for the windows, so I skew it into perspective, and then duplicate and transform it again so that it covers the entire side of the plane. I do the same process for the door.

05 Correcting values and color: I keep pasting in more photo textures until the black-and-white sketch is completely covered. Throughout the whole process, I'm making small fixes as I go, sometimes changing the values and colors of photos on the fly. I don't really bother with adjustment layers yet, until I have all the textures laid out in one group. Once I'm done, I'll create a new group that I use just for color correcting and mood. I darken the image as it is always easier for me to work from dark to light. I'll also lower the contrast with another Levels adjustment layer. I also try to bring all of my textures into the same color space, making sure



03



04

that there aren't any glaring inconsistencies. Try to work efficiently with adjustment layers, but don't be afraid to add as many as you need, that's the whole point of working with multiple layers and groups.

06 Adding more to the scene: The scene needed some more objects of interest, so after I quickly sketched some shapes on a separate layer I decide to add in these old drums of toxic waste. This is where the 3D comes in, so I take a slight detour into Maya in order to model a basic oil drum and duplicate it into the position I want. I paste the render into a separate group within my textures folder.

I use adjustment layers set as Clipping Masks (Alt+click on the adjustment layer in order to turn it into a Clipping Mask) on top of the drums to fit them into the scene. I also paint in some basic atmosphere in a new folder that I titled Haze. ►

⚡ PRO TIP

Painting atmosphere and light

When painting atmosphere and light, the main thing to remember is to be bold, but also subtle. What I mean is that you should use the largest airbrush you can with decisive strokes. You can always create a mask on top of that layer and paint out the excess light or atmosphere by using the same bold strokes, preferably with a lower opacity brush, somewhere between 10-50%. The best guide for atmospheric effects is good quality reference.

03 Begin to layer in photo textures on top of the black-and-white sketch

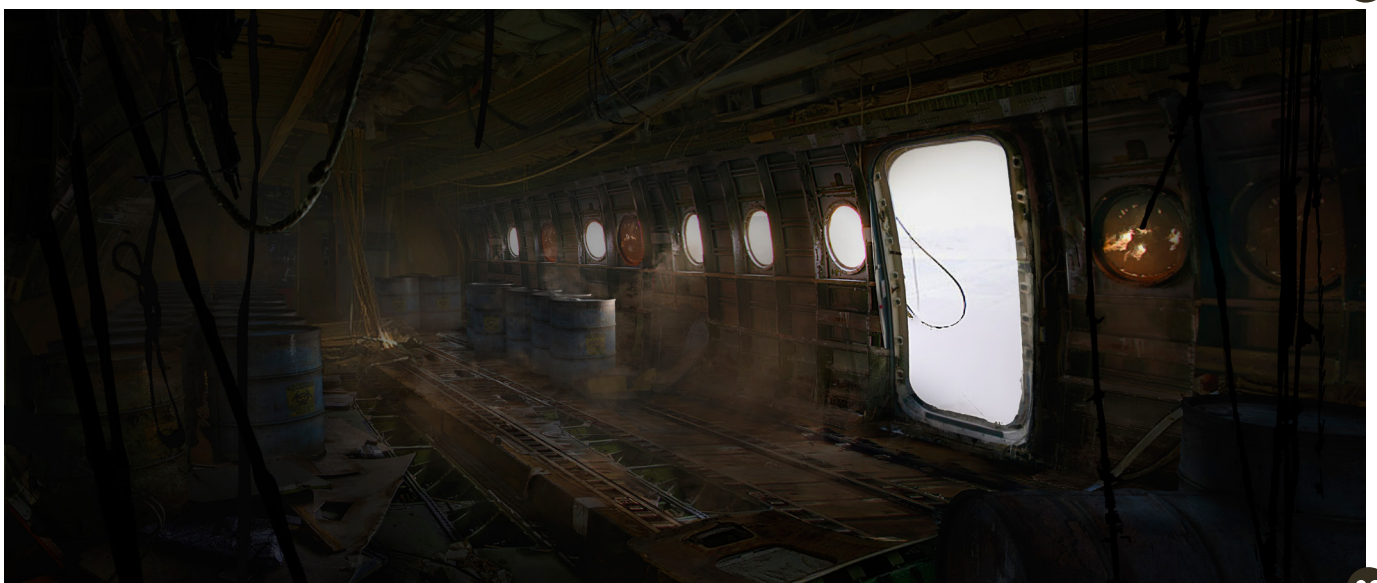
05 Finishing the basic texturing and establishing values and mood

04 Correcting perspective and layering in more photo textures

06 Adding in 3D elements and texture onto the drums in Overlay



05



06



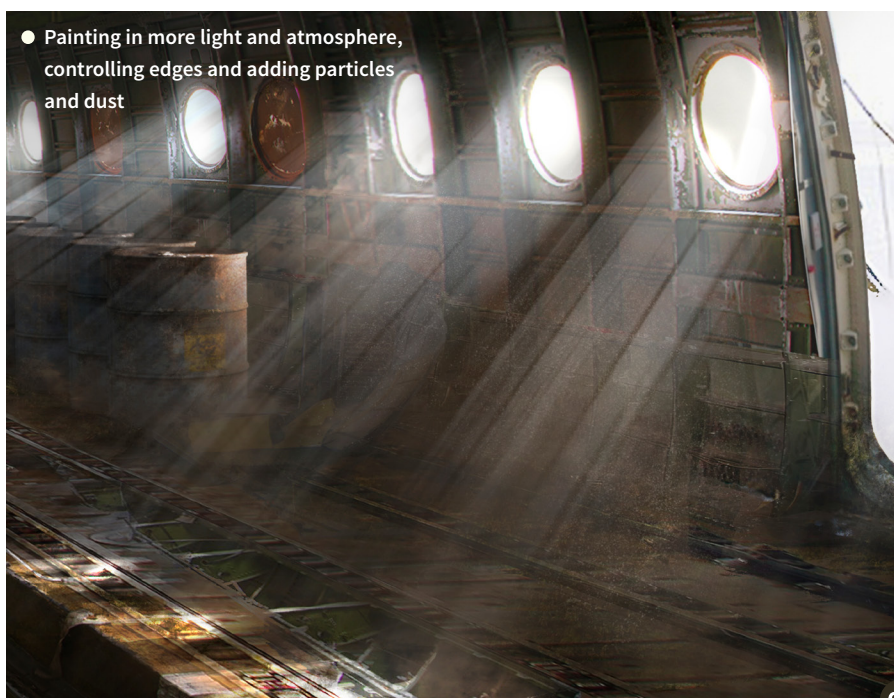
● Painting in the light and more atmospheric effects

07 **Painting in light:** Now comes the fun part – painting in the light beams. I create a new group and paint each beam on a separate layer set to Screen mode. I use a light beam brush that I then transform. I add a Layer mask for each beam and very gently brush it out at the edges. Keep in mind the perspective of your shot as this will affect your light beams as well. The reason we are seeing light beams at all is because we are in a dusty, hazy sort of environment, which is why they are so visible here.

I also keep working the rest of the image at the same time, flipping the canvas and checking my values constantly with a black-and-white adjustment layer. Note that I still haven't put in the characters, which I am sort of avoiding because I'm too focused on the environment.

08 **Light and atmosphere detailing:** Try to get good reference for painting the light beams, and not simply rely on brushes and

● Painting in more light and atmosphere, controlling edges and adding particles and dust





blending modes. For example, don't forget to paint in the bits of dust and atmosphere that are catching the light from the beams, and try to not paint them in too heavy handed. These effects can be on a separate layer set to Screen mode, since we want them to catch the light, and not obscure it.

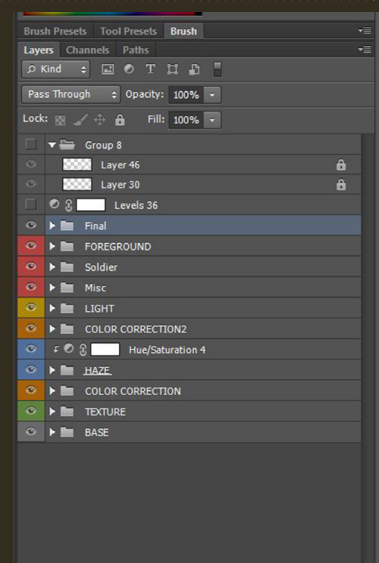
For the patches of light on the floor, I create another levels adjustment layer and really amp the light. Then I fill the adjustment layer with black and paint in the light with a white brush. Don't forget to note which edges might catch light, and use a Hard brush to avoid muddiness.

Since we have the toxic waste drums on a separate layer, we can Ctrl+click on the layer in order to make a selection, and easily paint in these highlights. ►

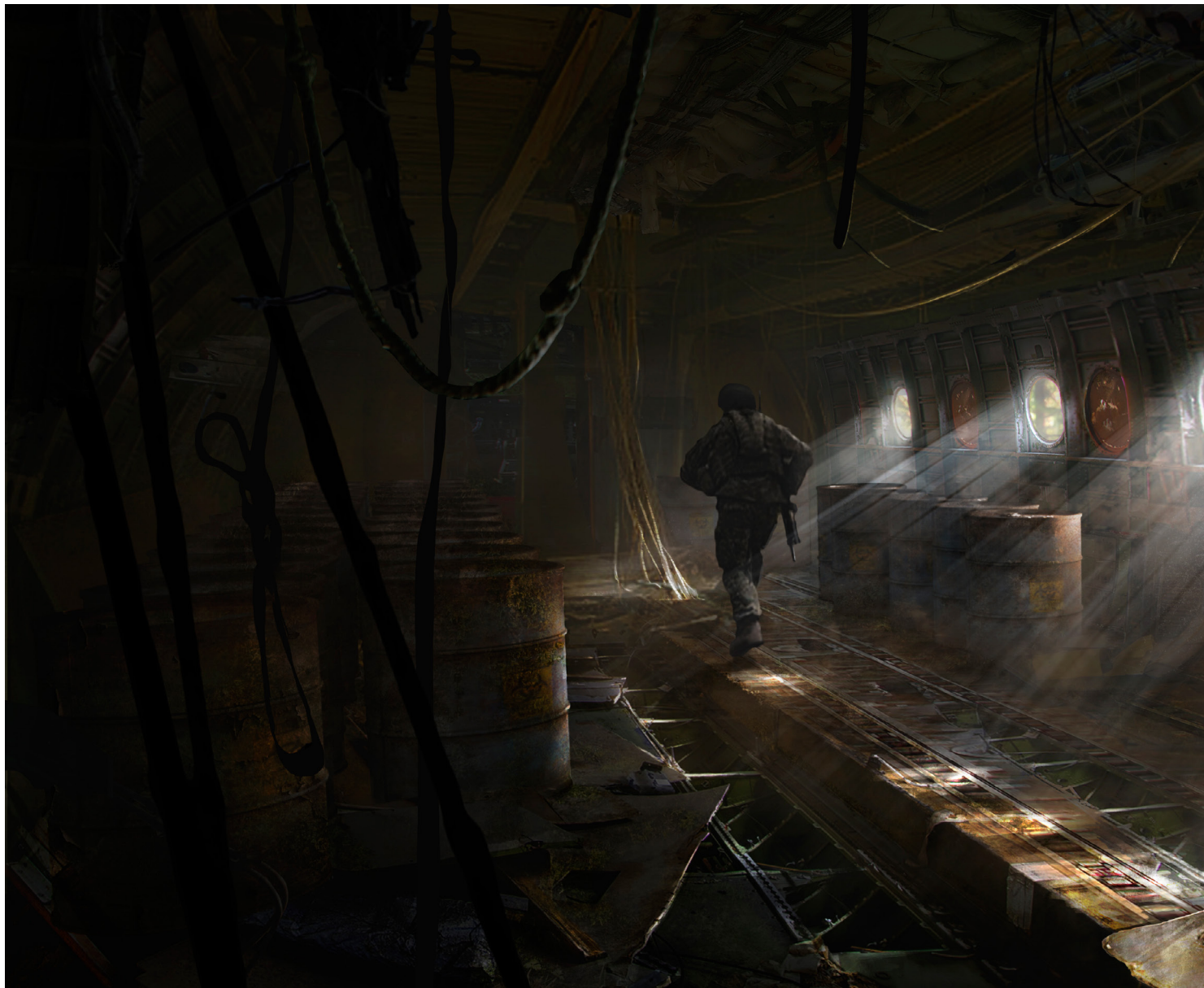
⚡ PRO TIP

Layer organization

When I'm just painting something for myself, I don't really care about organizing my layers. However, especially for paintings like this, it will definitely help you in the long run. It doesn't have to be perfect, but it should follow some sort of logic. Your base layers come first, then textures, then color and value corrections. Haze goes over all of that, and then light layers usually go over everything, since you want your lights to affect your entire image. Also, you can Ctrl+click anywhere on your canvas with the Selection tool to find a specific layer.



Color code your layers ►



09 Adding in the characters: It's actually not a good thing to leave the characters for last, since you want to see what your final image will look like as soon as you can. I decide to only put in two characters in order to not create too much confusion in the shot, and leave it rather ambiguous.

I keep my main character in the foreground in a separate group, and grade him into the scene with Levels and Color adjustments. Since he is being hit with light from behind, he is mostly going to be in silhouette. Instead of painting in a cast shadow, I simply mask out the light that I have from my light layers. For the background character, I place him in between the two respective light beam layers, and then paint in a few highlights.

10 More details and adjustments: Once everything is fitting into the scene

properly, I paint in some more details on a new layer. I add some dust on the ground at my characters' feet and paint in some more wiring, scratches and miscellaneous details.

I realize that I completely forgot about the background outside of the plane. I use the Magic Wand and Lasso tool to make a selection, and paste a photo of a forest that I took into the selection (Ctrl+Alt+Shift+V), I use the Paint Daubs Filter from the filter gallery and adjust the levels to really blow out the highlights. I move it around inside the selection until I find a position that I'm happy with.

I add a little bit of rim light to my character and paint some color and light on his goggles. I also add some texture details to his gun.

11 Final touches: After I'm done detailing, I copy and merge all layers

(Ctrl+Alt+Shift+E) and apply a Smart Sharpen Filter from the filter menu. I find that the Smart Sharpen Filter is a little less jarring than the Unsharp Mask, while still getting the job done. I also add another adjustment layer to tweak the brightness and contrast, masking it out where I don't need it with a Soft airbrush. Lastly, I'll add just a tiny bit more blue into the shadows with another Color Balance adjustment layer. ●

09 Grading in characters, adjusting their silhouettes and painting in highlights

10 Adding smaller details and more light

11 Finishing touches and more adjustment layers



09



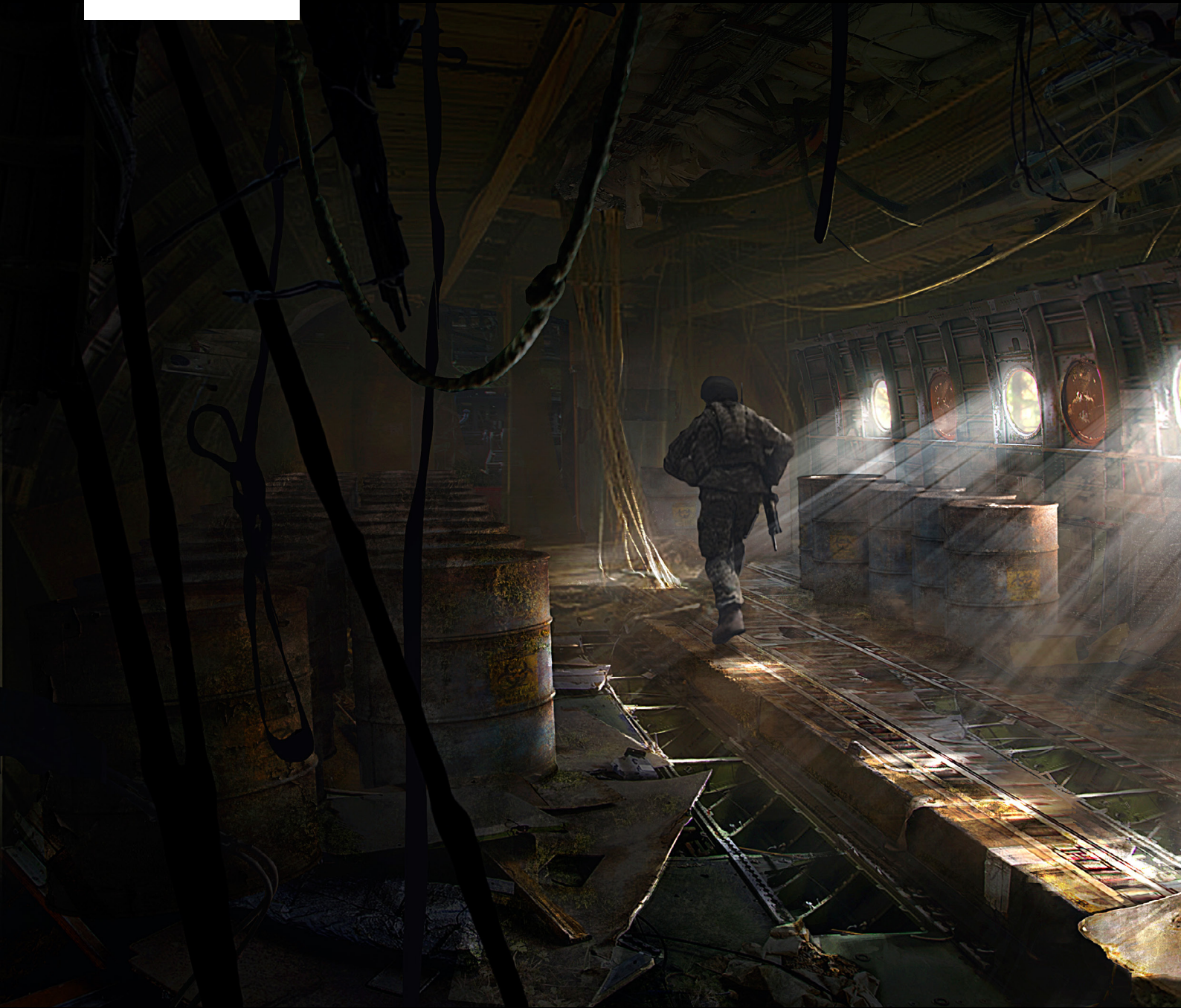
10

The Artist



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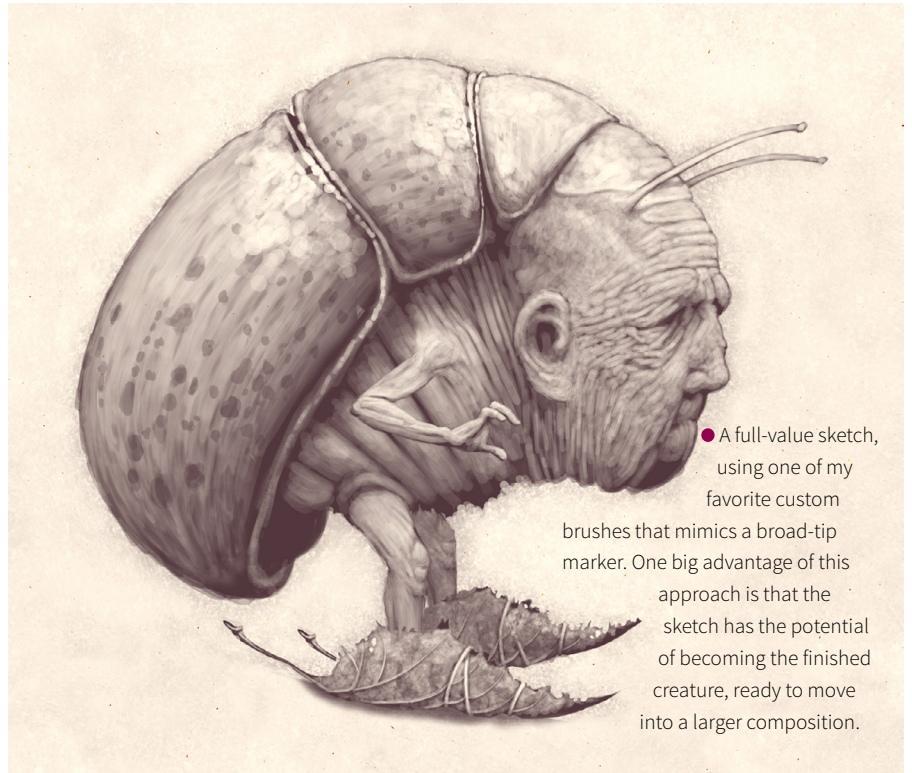
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Sketching and drawing in general are, for me, a means to a narrative end. The story behind the imagery drives everything, helping me make decisions and determine even the finer details and subtleties. Sometimes that story is pre-defined for a freelance project, and sometimes it's simply the story that comes into my mind as a creature or character develops; but it's always there.

I try to work without having to think much about technique. I don't want it to be a distraction that snaps the viewer out of that alternate world I'm trying to show them. I work digitally but I try to avoid a computer-like look. I want my images – sketches or finished illustrations – to look like they could have been done traditionally. The important (and most challenging) thing is to make sure that whatever technique you use serves to hold the viewer in that imaginary world that you are creating.



● A full-value sketch, using one of my favorite custom brushes that mimics a broad-tip marker. One big advantage of this approach is that the sketch has the potential of becoming the finished creature, ready to move into a larger composition.



● I've read multiple stories of dragons abducting maidens, and I imagined a maiden's younger sister planning a counter-abduction in order to negotiate her sibling's return. Dangerous business.

- I frequently sketch over an existing texture. When the line work is done, I can Dodge or Mask the underlying texture to enhance 3D forms. This is fast and effective, and easy to redo if necessary without damaging the line drawing.



I used to sketch traditionally, then scan into Photoshop for the finished illustration, but about 10 years ago I switched to fully digital – I love it. It makes me bolder and more likely to try something that I wouldn't have years ago. But I think my early traditional training and experience gave me a love for that look which I still pursue in Photoshop.

Inspiration and ideas

I'm most inspired and moved by creative work that is multi-layered and beautifully crafted, such as allegorical novels or poetry. I love the English Romantic poets, Shakespeare, and modern fantasy masterpieces such as John Crowley's *Little, Big*. I love movies and have a collection of favorites that I study.

I look at a lot of art and, of course, I have favorites who are constant inspirations to me. I love Rembrandt, Arthur Rackham, and some British Victorian painters such as Waterhouse and Leighton. There are also many contemporary illustrators and artists whom I admire and want to be when I grow up.

Materials

I sketch and draw almost entirely with a medium-sized Wacom tablet in Photoshop. I don't have a huge array of custom brushes – maybe a dozen that I use often, but only two that I use 90% of the time. When I travel and can't take the computer and tablet, I carry a small sketchbook and disposable ballpoint pens. Cheap, disposable pens are actually great for sketching and can produce more subtlety than you might think. I later scan those sketches into Photoshop if they're worth developing.

Sketching techniques

Many of my images begin as scribbles; then I look at the shapes like a Rorschach test and let the scribble become whatever it wants. Sometimes a creature or character emerges. Sometimes nothing happens and I try again. This approach is fun for developing imaginary worlds that I didn't realize were in my mind. I sketch sometimes with simple line, other times in full value, depending on the subject and what's working on a given day.

I switch between dark and white (which is easy to do in Photoshop), sketching with white back into the dark, creating texture and dimension that's more difficult to achieve by constantly drawing only darker.

● He's the procession-leader in my finished illustration, *Changeling*, along with *Pygmy-possum* and *Sparrow*. This is another result of having seen a real human who made me think of a particular human-animal combination.



- Both *Pygmy-possum* and *Sparrow* are examples of disposable-pen sketches I did while traveling, when I couldn't take the computer/tablet combo along. I later scanned the sketches into Photoshop and dropped a grunge texture behind them to quickly develop some depth.



- Another study for the *Goblin-King* processional. I love to create eye contact between the viewer and a secondary subject in my illustrations, so that the viewer might be surprised at being noticed.



- A quick line study for a procession idea led by the *Goblin-King*. Medieval clothing fascinates me and I enjoy inventing possibilities based on roughly-tailored cloth and bindings like ropes or sashes. They can be great compositional tools and opportunities.



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